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CURIOUS MYTHS OF THE MIDDLE AGES

Second Series

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CURIOUS MYTHS OF THE MIDDLE AGES

BY

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Second Series

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MEDIÆVAL MYTHS

S. George

A MORE interesting task for the comparative mythologist can hardly be found, than the analysis of the legends attaching to this celebrated soldier-martyr;—interesting, because these legends contain almost unaltered representative myths of the Semitic and Aryan peoples, and myths which may be traced with certainty to their respective roots.

The popular traditions current relating to the Cappadocian martyr are distinct in the East and the West, and are alike sacred myths of faded creeds, absorbed into the newer faith, and re-coloured. On dealing with these myths, we are necessarily drawn into the discussion as to whether such a person as S. George existed, and if he did

exist, whether he were a Catholic or a heretic. Eusebius says (Eccl. Hist. B. viii. c. 5), "Immediately on the first promulgation of the edict (of Diocletian), a certain man of no mean origin, but highly esteemed for his temporal dignities, as soon as the decree was published against the Churches in Nicomedia, stimulated by a divine zeal, and excited by an ardent faith, took it as it was openly placed and posted up for public inspection, and tore it to pieces as a most profane and wicked act. This, too, was done when two of the Cæsars were in the city, the first of whom was the eldest and chief of all, and the other held the fourth grade of the imperial dignity after him. But this man, as the first that was distinguished there in this manner, after enduring what was likely to follow an act so daring, preserved his mind calm and serene until the moment when his spirit fled."

This martyr, whose name Eusebius does not give, has been generally supposed to be S. George, and if so, this is nearly all we know authentic concerning him. But popular as a saint he unquestionably was, from a very early age. He is believed to have suffered at Nicomedia in 303, and his worship was soon extended through Phœnicia, Palestine, and the whole East. In the seventh century he had two

Churches in Rome; in Gaul he was honoured in the fifth century. In an article contributed to the Transactions of the Royal Society of Literature[1], Mr. Hogg speaks of a Greek inscription copied from a very ancient church, originally a heathen temple at Ezra, in Syria, dated A.D. 346, in which S. George is spoken of as a holy martyr. This is important testimony, as at this very time was living the other George, the Alexandrian bishop, (d. 362) with whom the Saint is sometimes confounded.

The earliest acts quoted by the Bollandists, are in Greek, and belong to the sixth century; they are fabulous. Beside these, are some Latin acts, said to have been composed by Pasikrâs, the servant of the martyr, which belong to the eighth century, and which are certainly translations of an earlier work than the Greek acts printed by the Bollandists. These are also apocryphal. Consequently we know of S. George little, except that there was such a martyr, that he was a native of Lydda, but brought up in Cappadocia, that he entered the Roman army and suffered a cruel death for Christ. That his death was one of great cruelty, is rendered probable by the manner in which his biographers

[1] Second Series, vol. vii. pt. i.

dilate on his tortures, all agreeing to represent them as excessive.

The first to question the reverence shown for S. George was Calvin, who says 'Nil eos Christo reliquum facere qui pro nihilo ducunt ejus intercessionem, nisi accedant Georgius aut Hippolitus, aut similes larvæ.' Dr. Reynolds follows in the wake, and identifies the martyr with the Arian Bishop of Alexandria. This man had been born in a fuller's mill at Epiphania, in Cilicia. He is first heard of as purveyor of provisions for the army at Constantinople, where he assumed the profession of Arianism; from thence, having been detected in certain frauds, he was obliged to fly, and take refuge in Cappadocia. His Arian friends obtained his pardon, by payment of a fine, and he was sent to Alexandria, where his party elected him Bishop, in opposition to S. Athanasius, immediately after the death of the Arian prelate, Gregory. There, associating with himself Dracontius, master of the mint, and the Count Diodorus, he tyrannized alike over Catholics and heathens, till the latter rose against him and put him to death. Dr. Heylin levelled a lance in honour of the Patron of England[2]; but his histori-

[2] Historie of that Most famous Saint and Soldier of Christ Jesus, S. George of Cappadocia, 1633.

cal character was again questioned in 1753, by Dr. John Pettingal in a work on the original of the equestrian statue of S. George; and he was answered by Dr. Samuel Pegge, in 1777, in a paper read before the Society of Antiquaries. Gibbon, without much investigation into the ground of the charge, assumes the identity of the Saint and the Arian prelate. "The odious stranger, disguising every circumstance of time and place, assumed the mask of a martyr, a saint, and a Christian hero; and the infamous George of Cappadocia has been transformed into the renowned S. George of England, the patron of arms, of chivalry, and of the Garter[3]."

The great improbability of such a transformation would lead one to question the assertion, even if on no other ground. Arians and Catholics were too bitterly hostile, for it to be possible that a partisan of the former, and a persecutor, should be accepted as a saint by the latter. The writings of S. Athanasius were sufficiently known to the Mediævals to save them from falling into such an error, and S. Athanasius paints his antagonist in no charming colours. I am disposed to believe that there

[3] Gibbon's Decline and Fall, chap. xxiii.

really was such a person as S. George, that he was a martyr to the Catholic faith, and that the very uncertainty which existed regarding him, tended to give the composers of his biography the opportunity of attaching to him popular heathen myths, which had been floating unadopted by any Christian hero. The number of warrior saints was not so very great; Sebastian's history was fixed, so were those of Maurice and Gereon, but George was unprovided with a history. The deficiency was soon supplied. We have a similar instance in the story of S. Hippolitus. The ancient tale of the son of Theseus torn by horses was deliberately transferred to a Christian of the same name.

The substance of the Greek acts is to this effect:

George was born of Christian parents in Cappadocia. His father suffered a martyr's death, and the mother with her child took refuge in Palestine. He early entered the army, and behaved with great courage and endurance. At the age of twenty he was bereaved of his mother, and by her death came in for a large fortune. He then went to the court of Diocletian, where he hoped to find advancement. On the breaking out of the persecution, he distributed his money among the poor, and declared himself, before the Emperor,

to be a Christian. Having been ordered to sacrifice, he refused, and was condemned to death. The first day, he was thrust with spears to prison, one of the spears snapped like straw when it touched him. He was then fastened by the feet and hands to posts, and a heavy stone was laid upon his breast.

The second day, he was bound to a wheel set with blades of knives and swords. Diocletian believed him to be dead; but an angel appearing, George courteously saluted him in military fashion, whereby the persecutor ascertained that the Saint was still living. On removing him from the wheel, it was discovered that all his wounds were healed. George was then cast into a pit of quicklime, which, however, did not cause his death. On the next day but one, the Emperor sent to have his limbs broken, and he was discovered on his knees perfectly whole.

He was next made to run in red-hot iron shoes. The following night and day he spent in prayer, and on the sixth day he appeared before Diocletian walking and unhurt. He was then scourged with thongs of hide till his flesh came off his back, but was well next day.

On the seventh day he drank two cups, whereof

the one was prepared to make him mad, the other to poison him, without experiencing any ill effects. He then performed some miracles, raised a dead man to life, and restored to life an ox which had been killed;—miracles which resulted in numerous conversions.

That night George dreamed that the Saviour laid a golden crown on his head, and bade him prepare for Paradise. S. George at once called to him the servant who wrote these memoirs (*ὅστις καὶ τὰ ὑπὸ τὸν ἅγιον ὑπομνήματα σὺν ἀκριβείᾳ πάσῃ συνέταξεν*), and commanded him, after his death, to take his body and will to Palestine. On the eighth day, the saint, by the sign of the cross, forced the devil inhabiting the statue of Apollo to declare that he was a fallen angel; then all the statues of the gods fell before him.

This miracle converted the Empress Alexandra; and Diocletian was so exasperated against the truth, that he condemned her to instant death. George was then executed. The day of his martyrdom was the 23rd of April.

The Latin acts may be summed up as follows; they, as already stated, are a translation from a Greek original:

The devil urges Dacian, Emperor of the Persians,

king of the four quarters of heaven, having dominion over seventy-two kings, to persecute the Church. At this time lived George of Cappadocia, a native of Melitena. Melitena is also the scene of his martyrdom. Here he lived with a holy widow. He is subjected to numerous tortures, such as the rack, iron pincers, fire, a sword-spiked wheel, shoes nailed to his feet; he is put into an iron box set within with sharp nails, and flung down a precipice; he is beaten with sledge-hammers, a pillar is laid on him, a heavy stone dashed on to his head; he is stretched on a red-hot iron bed, melted lead is poured over him; he is cast into a well, transfixed with forty long nails, shut into a brazen bull over a fire, and cast into a well with a stone round his neck. Each time he returns from a torment, he is restored to former vigour. His tortures continue through seven years. His constancy and miracles are the means of converting 40,900 men, and the Empress Alexandra. Dacian then orders the execution of George and his queen; and as they die, a whirlwind of fire carries off the persecutor.

These two acts are the source of all later Greek legends.

Papenbroech prints legends by Simeon Meta-

phrastes (d. 904), Andreas Hierosolymites, and Gregorios Kyprios (d. 1289).

Reinbot von Dorn (cent. xiii.), or the French author from whom he translated the life of S. George, thought fit to reduce the extravagance of the original to moderate proportions, the seventy-two kings were reduced to seven, the countless tortures to eight; George is bound, and has a weight laid on him, is beaten with sticks, starved, put on a wheel covered with blades, quartered and thrown into a pond, rolled down a hill in a brazen bull, his nails transfixed with poisoned thorns, and he is then executed with the sword.

Jacques de Voragine says that he was first attached to a cross, and torn with iron hooks till his bowels protruded, and that then he was washed with salt water. Next day he was given poison to drink without its affecting him. Then George was fastened to a wheel covered with razors and knives, but the wheel snapped. He was next cast into a caldron of molten lead. George was uninjured by the bath. Then, at his prayer, lightning fell and destroyed all the idols, whilst the earth, opening, swallowed up the priests. At the sight of this, the wife of Dacian, whom Jacques

de Voragine makes proconsul under Diocletian, is converted, and she and George are decapitated. Thereupon lightning strikes Dacian and his ministers.

S. George, then, according to the Oriental Christian story, suffers at least seven martyrdoms, and revives after each, the last excepted.

The Mussulmans revere him equally with the Christians, and tell a tale concerning him having a strong affinity to that recorded in the acts. Gherghis, or El Khoudi, as he is called by them, lived at the same time as the Prophet. He was sent by God to the king of El Mauçil with the command that he should accept the faith. This the king refused to do, and ordered the execution of Gherghis. The saint was slain, but God revived him, and sent him to the king again. A second time was he slain, and again did God restore him to life. A third time did he preach his mission. Then the persecutor had him burned, and his ashes scattered in the Tigris. But God restored him to life once more, and destroyed the king and all his subjects[4]. The Greek historian, John Kantakuzenos (d. 1380) remarks, that in his time there were several shrines erected

[4] Mas'ûdi, übers. von Sprenger, vol. i. p. 120.

to the memory of George, at which the Mohammedans paid their devotions; and the traveller Burckhardt relates, that "the Turks pay great veneration to S. George;" Dean Stanley moreover noticed a Mussulman chapel on the sea-shore near Sarafend, the ancient Sarepta, dedicated to El Khouder, in which "there is no tomb inside, only hangings before a recess. This variation from the usual type of Mussulman sepulchres was, as we were told by peasants on the spot, because El Khouder is not yet dead, but flies round and round the world, and these chapels are built wherever he has appeared[5]." Ibn Wahshíya al Kasdani was the translator of the Book of Nabathæan Agriculture. "Towards the year 900 of our era, a descendant of those ancient Babylonian families who had fled to the marshes of Wasith and of Bassora, where their posterity still dwell, was struck with profound admiration for the works of his ancestors, whose language he understood, and probably spoke. Ibn Wahshíya al Kasdani, or the Chaldæan, was a Mussulman, but Islamism only dated in his family from the time of his great-grandfather; he hated the Arabs, and cherished the same feeling of national jealousy to-

[5] Sinai and Palestine, p. 274.

wards them as the Persians also entertained against their conquerors. A piece of good fortune threw into his hands a large collection of Nabathæan writings, which had been rescued from Moslem fanaticism. The zealous Chaldæan devoted his life to their translation, and thus created a Nabathæo-Arabic library, of which three complete works, to say nothing of the fragments of a fourth, have descended to our days[6]." One of these is the Book of Nabathæan Agriculture, written by Kuthāmi the Babylonian. In it we find the following remarkable passage: "The contemporaries of Yanbūshādh assert that all the sekā'in of the gods and all the images lamented over Yanbūshādh after his death, just as all the angels and sekā'in lamented over Tammūzī. The images (of the gods), they say, congregated from all parts of the world to the temple in Babylon, and betook themselves to the temple of the Sun, to the great golden image that is suspended between heaven and earth. The Sun image stood, they say, in the midst of the temple, surrounded by all the images of the world. Next to it stood the images of the Sun in all countries; then those of the

[6] Ernest Renan, Essay on the Age and Antiquity of the Book of Nabathæan Agriculture, London, 1862, p. 5.

Moon; next those of Mars; after them, the images of Mercury; then those of Jupiter; after them, those of Venus; and last of all, of Saturn. Thereupon the image of the Sun began to bewail Tammūzī, and the idols to weep; and the image of the Sun uttered a lament over Tammūz and narrated his history, whilst the idols all wept from the setting of the sun till its rising at the end of that night. Then the idols flew away, returning to their own countries. They say that the eyes of the idol of Tehāma (in South Arabia), called the eagle, are perpetually flowing with tears, and will so continue, from the night wherein it lamented over Tammūz along with the image of the Sun, because of the peculiar share that it had in the story of Tammūz. This idol, called Nesr, they say, is the one that inspired the Arabs with the gift of divination, so that they can tell what has not yet come to pass, and can explain dreams before the dreamers state what they are. They (the contemporaries of Yanbūshādh) tell that the idols in the land of Babel bewailed Yanbūshādh singly in all their temples a whole night long till morning. During this night there was a great flood of rain, with violent thunder and lightning, as also a furious earthquake (in the district) from the borders of the mountain ridge of

Holwān to the banks of the Tigris near the city Nebārwājā, on the eastern bank of that river. The idols, they say, returned during this flood to their places, because they had been a little shaken. This flood was brought by the idols as a judgment upon the people of the land of Babel for having abandoned the dead body of Yanbūshādh, as it lay on the bare ground in the desert of Shāmās, so that the flood carried his dead body to the Wādī el-A'hfar, and then swept it from this wādī into the sea. Then there was drought and pestilence in the land of Babel for three months, so that the living were not sufficient to bury the dead. These tales (of Tammūz and Yanbūshādh) have been collected and are read in the temples after prayers, and the people weep and lament much thereupon. When I myself am present with the people in the temple, at the feast of Tammūz, which is in the month called after him, and they read his story and weep, I weep along with them always, out of friendly feeling towards them, and because I compassionate their weeping, not that I believe what they relate of him. But I believe in the story of Yanbūshādh, and when they read it and weep, I weep along with them, very differently from my weeping over Tammūzī. The reason is this, that

the time of Yanbūshādh is nearer to our own than the time of Tammūz, and his story is, therefore, more certain and worthy of belief. It is possible that some portions of the story of Tammūz may be true, but I have my doubts concerning other parts of it, owing to the distance of his time from ours."

Thus writes Kūthāmī the Babylonian, and his translator adds :—

"Says Abū Bekr A'hmed ibn Wa'hshīya. This month is called Tammūz, according to what the Nabathæans say, as I have found it in their books, and is named after a man of whom a strange long story is told, and who was put to death, they relate, several times in succession in a most cruel manner. Each of their months is named after some excellent and learned man, who was one, in ancient times, of those Nabathæans that inhabited the land of Babel before the Chaldæans. This Tammūz was not one of the Chaldæans, nor of the Canaanites, nor of the Hebrews, nor of the Assyrians, but of the primeval Ianbānīs. . . All the Ssabians of our time, down to our own day, wail and weep over Tammūz in the month of that name, on the occasion of a festival in his honour, and make great lamentation over him; especially the women, who all arise, both here

(at Bagdad) and at 'Harrān, and wail and weep over Tammūz. They tell a long and silly story about him; but, as I have clearly ascertained, not one of either sect has any certain information regarding Tammūz, or the reason of their lamenting over him. However, after I had translated this book, I found in the course of my reading the statement that Tammūz was a man concerning whom there was a legend, and that he had been put to death in a shameful manner. That was all; not another word about him. They knew nothing more about him than to say, 'We found our ancestors weeping and wailing over him in this way at this feast that is called after him Tammūzi.' My own opinion is, that this festival which they hold in commemoration of Tammūz is an ancient one, and has maintained itself till now, whilst the story connected with him has been forgotten, owing to the remoteness of his age, so that no one of these Ssabians at the present day knows what his story was, nor why they lament over him." Ibn Wa'hshīya then goes on to speak of a festival celebrated by the Christians towards the end of the month Nisan (April) in honour of S. George, who is said to have been several times put to death by a king to whom he had gone to preach Chris-

tianity, and each time he was restored to life again, but at the last died. Then Ibn Wa'hshīya remarks that what is related of the blessed George is the same as that told of Tammūz, whose festival is celebrated in the month Tammūz; and he adds that besides what he found regarding Tammūz in the "Agriculture," he lit on another Nabathæan book, in which was related in full the legend of Tammūz;—"how he summoned a king to worship the seven (planets) and the twelve (signs), and how the king put him to death several times in a cruel manner, Tammūz coming to life again after each time, until at last he died; and behold! it was identical with the legend of S. George that is current among the Christians[7]."

Mohammed en Medūn in his Fihrist-el-U'lūm, says, "Tammūz (July). In the middle of this month is the Feast El Būgāt, that is, of the weeping women, which Feast is identical with that Feast of Tā-uz, which is celebrated in honour of the god Tā-uz. The women bewail him, because his Lord had him so cruelly martyred,

[7] Chwolson: über Tammūz. St. Petersburg, 1860, pp. 41—56. The translation is for the most part from the Christian Remembrancer, No. cxii., an article on Tammūz, with the conclusions of which I cannot altogether agree. My own conviction as to Tammūz will be seen in the sequel.

his bones being ground in a mill, and scattered to the winds[8]."

We have then the Eastern myth of S. George identified with that of Tammūz, by one who is impartial. What that myth of Tammūz was in its entirety we cannot say, but we have sufficient evidence in the statement of Ibn Wa'hshīya to conclude that the worship of S. George and its popularity in the East, is mainly due to the fact of his being a Christianized Tammūz.

Professor Chwolson insists on Tammūz having been a man, deified and worshipped; and the review below referred to confirms this theory. I believe this to be entirely erroneous. Tammūz stands to Chaldee mythology in precisely the same relation that the Ribhavas do to that of the Vedas. A French orientalist, M. Nève, wrote a learned work in 1847, on these ancient Indian deities, to prove that they were deified sages. But the careful study of the Vedic hymns to the Ribhus lead to an entirely opposite conclusion. They are the Summer breezes deified, which, in that they waft the smoke of the sacrifices to heaven, are addressed as assisting at the sacred offerings;

[8] Chwolson: Die Ssabier, ii. 27.

and in a later age, when their real signification was lost, they were anthropomorphized into a sacred caste of priests. A similar process has, I believe, taken place with Tammūz, who was the sun, regarded as a God and hero, dying at the close of each year, and reviving with the new one. In Kuthāmi's age the old deity was apparently misappreciated, and had suffered, in consequence, a reincarnation in Yanbūshādh, of whom a similar story was told, and who received similar worship, because he was in fact one with Tammūz.

The Phœnician Adonis was identical with Tammūz. S. Jerome in the Vulgate rendered the passage in Ezekiel (viii. 14), "He brought me to the door of the gate of the Lord's house, which was towards the north; and behold, there sat women weeping for Tammūz," by *ecce mulieres sedentes plangentes Adonidem;* and in his commentary on the passage says, "Whom we have interpreted Adonis, both the Hebrew and Syriac languages call Thamuz . . . and they call the month June by that name." He informs us also of a very important fact, that the solstice was the time when Tammūz was believed to have died, though the wailing for him took place in June. Consequently Tammūz's martyrdom took place at the

end of December. Cyril of Alexandria also tells us of the identity existing between Adonis and Tammūz (in Isaiah, chap. xviii.).

The name Adonis is purely Semitic, and signifies the Lord. His worship was introduced to the Greeks by the Phœnicians through Crete.

Adonis is identified with the Sun in one of the Orphic hymns: "Thou shining and vanishing in the beauteous circle of the Horæ, dwelling at one time in gloomy Tartarus, at another elevating thyself to Olympus, giving ripeness to the fruits[1]!" According to Theocritus, this rising and setting, this continual coursing, is accomplished in twelve months: "In twelve months the silent pacing Horæ follow him from the nether-world to that above, the dwelling of the Cyprian goddess, and then he declines again to Acheron[2]." The cause of these wanderings, according to the fable, was that two goddesses loved Adonis, Aphrodite, or more properly Astarte, and Persephone. Aphrodite, the Syrian Baalti, loved him so tenderly that the jealousy of Ares was aroused, and he sent a wild boar to gore him in the chase. When Adonis descended to the realm of darkness, Per-

[1] Orph. Hymn lv. 5, and 10, 11.
[2] Theocrit. Id. xv. 103, 104, 136.

sephone was inflamed with passion for the comely youth. Consequently a strife arose between her and Aphrodite, which should possess him. The quarrel was settled by Zeus dividing the year into three portions, whereof one, from the summer solstice to the autumn equinox, was to belong to Adonis, the second was to be spent by him with Aphrodite, and the third with Persephone. But Adonis voluntarily surrendered his portion to the goddess of beauty[3]. Others say, that Zeus decreed that he should spend six months in the heavens with Aphrodite, and the other six in the land of gloom with Persephone[4].

The worship of Adonis, who was the same as Baal, was general in Syria and Phœnicia. The devotion to Tammūz, we are told, was popular from Antioch to Elymaïs[5]. It penetrated into Greece from Crete. Biblos in Phœnicia was the main seat of this worship.

Tammūz, or Adonis, was again identical with Osiris. This is stated by several ancient writers[6].

The myth relating to Osiris was very similar. The Egyptian sun-god was born at the summer

[3] Cyrill. Alex. in Isa.; Apollodor. lib. iii. c. 14.
[4] Schol. in Theocrit. Id. iii. v. 48, and xv. v. 103.
[5] Ammian. Marcell. xxii. 9. Œlian, Hist. animal. xii. 33.
[6] Lucian. de dea Syria. n. 7. Steph. de Urb. v.

solstice and died at the winter solstice, when processions went round the temple seeking him, seven times. Osiris in heaven was the beloved of Isis, in the land of darkness was embraced by Nepthys.

Typhon, as the Greeks call Seth or Bes, a monster represented in swine or boar shape, attacked Osiris, and slaying him, cut him up, and cast him into the sea. This took place on the 17th of the month Athor.

Then began the wailing for Osiris, which lasted four days; this was followed by the seeking, and this again by the finding of the God.

Under another form, the same myth, and its accompanying ceremonies, prevailed in Egypt, just as at Babylon that of Tammūz had its reflection in the more modern *cultus* of Yanbūshādh. The soul of the deceased Osiris was supposed to be incarnate in Apis; and, in process of mythologic degradation, the legend of Osiris passed over to Apis, and with it the significant ceremonial. Thus Herodotus tells us how that at Memphis the death of the sacred bull was a cause of general wailing, and its discovery one of exultation. When Cambyses was in Egypt, and the land groaned under foreign sway, no Apis appeared; but when his two armies were destroyed, and he came to Memphis, Apis had

appeared; and he found the conquered people manifesting their joy in dances, and with feasting and gay raiment[7].

We have, it will be seen, among Phœnicians, Syrians, Egyptians, and Nabathæans, all Semitic nations, peculiar myths, with symbolic ceremonies bearing such a close resemblance to one another, that we are constrained to acknowledge them as forms, slightly varied, of some primæval myth.

We find also among the Arabs, another Semitic nation, a myth identical with that of the Babylonian Tammūz, prevalent among them not long after their adoption of Islamism. How shall we account for this? My answer is, that the pre-Mohammedan Arabs had a worship very similar to that of Tammūz, Baal, Adonis, or Osiris, and that, on their conversion to the faith of the prophet, they retained the ancient legend, adapting it to El Koudir, whom they identified with S. George, because they found that the Christians had already adopted this course, and had fixed the ancient myth on the martyr of Nicomedia. In Babylonia it had already passed to Yanbūshādh; and it was made to pass further to Gherghis, much as in Greece the story of Apollo and Python was transferred to Perseus and the sea-

[7] Thalia, c. 27.

monster, and, as we shall see presently, was adopted into Christian mythology, and attributed to the subject of this paper. And indeed the process was perhaps facilitated by the fact that one of the names of this solar god was Giggras; he was so called after the pipes used in wailing for him.

The circumstances of the death of Tammūz vary in the different Semitic creeds.

Let me place them briefly in apposition.

Nabathæan myth. Tammūz.

A great hero, and prophet; is cruelly put to death several times, but revives after each martyrdom. His death a subject of wailing.

Phœnician myth. Adon or Baal.

A beautiful deity, killed by the furious Boar god. Revived and sent to heaven. Divides his time between heaven and hell, subject of wailing, seeking, and finding.

Syrian myth. Baal.

Identical with the Phœnician.

Egyptian myth. Osiris.

A glorious god and great hero, killed by the evil god. Passes half his time in heaven, and half in the nether world. Subject of wailing, seeking, and finding.

Arabian myth. El Khouder, original name Ta'uz.

A prophet, killed by a wicked king several times and revived each time.

Oriental Christian myth. S. George.

A soldier, killed by a wicked king, undergoes numerous torments, but revives after each. On earth lives with a widow. Takes to the other world with him the queen. Wailing and seeking fall away, and the festival alone remains.

From this tabular view of the legends it is, I think, impossible not to see that S. George, in his mythical character, is a Semitic god Christianized. In order to undergo the process of conversion, a few little arrangements were rendered necessary, to divest the story of its sensuous character, and purify it. Astarte or Aphrodite had to be got out of the way somehow. She was made into a pious widow, in whose house the youthful saint lodged.

Then Persephone, the queen of Hades, had to be accounted for. She was turned into a martyr, Alexandra ; and just as Persephone was the wife of the ruthless monarch of the nether world, so was Alexandra represented as the queen of Diocletian or Datian, and accompanied George to the unseen world. Consequently in the land of light, George was with the widow ; in that of gloom, with Alexandra : just as Osiris spent his year between Isis and Nepthys, and Adonis between Aphrodite and Persephone.

According to the ancient Christian legend, the body of George travelled from the place of his martyrdom to that of his nativity; this resembles the journey of the body of Osiris, down the Nile, over the waves to Biblos, where Isis found him again.

The influence of Persian mythology is also perceptible in the legend. El Nedim says that Tammūz was brayed in a mill; this feature in his martyrdom is adopted from the Iranian tradition of Hom, the Indian Soma, or the divine drink of sacrifice, which was anthropomorphized, and the history of the composition of the liquor was transformed into the fable of the hero. The Hom was pounded in a mortar, and the juice was poured on the sacrificial flames, and thus carried up into heaven in fire; in the legend of the demigod, Hom was a martyr who was cruelly bruised and broken in a mortar, but who revived, and ascended to the skies. In the tale of George there is another indication of the absorption into it of a foreign myth. George revives the dead cow of the peasant Glycerius; the same story is told of Abbot William of Villiers, of S. Germanus, of S. Garmon, and of S. Mochua. Thor also brought to life goats which had been killed and eaten. The same is told in the Rigveda of the Ribhus: "O sons of Sudharvān, out of the hide have you made the cow to arise;

by your songs the old have you made young, and from one horse have you made another horse[8]."

The numbers in the legend of the soldier-saint have a solar look about them. The torments of S. George last seven years, or, according to the Greek acts, seven days; the tyrant reigns over the four quarters of heaven, and seven kings; in the Nabathæan story, Tammūz preaches the worship of the seven planets, and the twelve signs of the Zodiac. Osiris is sought seven days. The seven winter months are features in all mythologies.

The manner in which S. George dies repeatedly represents the different ways in which the sun dies each day. The Greeks, and, indeed, most nations, regarded the close of day as the expiration of the solar deity, and framed myths to account for his decease. In Greek mythology the solar gods are many, and the stories of their deaths are distributed so as to provide each with his exit from the world; but in Semitic mythology it is not so, the sun-god is one, and all kinds of deaths are attributed to him alone, or, if he suffers anthropomorphism, to his representative.

Phaethon is a solar deity; he falls into the

[8] See my note in Appendix to "The Folklore of the N. Counties of England," London, 1866. pp. 321-4.

western seas. Herakles is another; he expires in flames, rending the poisoned garment given him by Dejanira. Phaethon's death represents the rapid descent of the sun in the west; that of Herakles, the setting orb in a flaming western sky rending the fire-lined clouds, which wrap his body. The same blaze, wherein sank the sun, was also supposed to be a funeral pyre, on which lay Memnon; and the clouds fleeting about it, some falling into the fire, and some scudding over the darkling sky, were the birds which escaped from the funeral pyre. Achilles, a humanized sun-god, was vulnerable in his heel, just as the Teutonic Sigfried could only be wounded in his back: this represents the sun as retiring from the heavens with his back turned, struck by the weapon of darkness, just as Ares, the blind God, with his tusk slew Adonis, or sightless Hodr with his mistletoe shaft smote Baldur.

In the S. George fable, we have the martyr, like Memnon or Herakles, on the fire, and transfixed, like Achilles and Ajax; exposed in a brazen bull on a fire, that is, hung in the full rain-cloud over the western blaze; cast down a hill, like Phaethon; plunged into boiling metal, a representation of the lurid vapours of the west.

Having identified S. George or Tammūz with the sun, we shall have little difficulty in seeing that Aphrodite or Isis is the moon when visible, and Persephone or Nepthys the waned moon; Persephone is in fact no other than Aphrodite in the region of gloom, where, according to the decree of Zeus, she was to spend six months with Aidoneus, and six months in heaven.

But it is time for us to turn to the Western myth, that of the fight of S. George with the dragon; in this, again, we shall find sacred beliefs of antiquity reappearing in Christian form.

The story of S. George and the dragon first presents itself in the Legenda Aurea of Jacques de Voragine. It was accepted by the unquestioning clerks and laity of the middle ages, so that it found its way into the office-books of the Church.

O Georgi Martyr inclyte,
Te decet laus et gloria,
Predotatum militia;
Per quem puella regia,
Existens in tristitia,
Coram Dracone pessimo,
Salvata est. Ex animo
Te rogamus corde intimo,
Ut cunctis cum fidelibus
Cœli jungamur civibus
Nostris ablatis sordibus:

Et simul cum lætitia
Tecum simus in gloria;
Nostraque reddant labia
Laudes Christo cum gratia,
Cui sit honos in secula.

Thus sang the clerks from the Sarum "Horæ B. Mariæ," on S. George's day, till the reformation of the Missals and Breviaries by Pope Clement VII., when the story of the dragon was cut out, and S. George was simply acknowledged as a martyr, reigning with Christ. His introit was from Ps. lxiii. The Collect, "God, who makest us glad through the merits and intercession of blessed George the martyr, mercifully grant that we who ask through him Thy good things may obtain the gift of Thy grace." The Epistle, 2 Tim. ii. 8—11, and iii. 10—13; and the Gospel, S. John xv. 1—8.

The legend, as told by Voragine, is this.

George, a tribune, was born in Cappadocia, and came to Lybia, to the town called Silene, near which was a pond infested by a monster, which had many times driven back an armed host that had come to destroy him. He even approached the walls of the city, and with his exhalations poisoned all who were near. To avoid such visits, he was furnished each day with two sheep, to satisfy his

voracity. If these were not given, he so attacked the walls of the town, that his envenomed breath infected the air, and many of the inhabitants died. He was supplied with sheep, till they were exhausted, and it was impossible to procure the necessary number. Then the citizens held counsel, and it was decided that each day a man and a beast should be offered, so that at last they gave up their children, sons and daughters, and none were spared. The lot fell one day on the princess. The monarch, horror-struck, offered in exchange for her his gold, his silver, and half his realm, only desiring to save his daughter from this frightful death. But the people insisted on the sacrifice of the maiden, and all the poor father could obtain, was a delay of eight days, in which to bewail the fate of the damsel. At the expiration of this time, the people returned to the palace, and said, "Why do you sacrifice your subjects for your daughter? We are all dying before the breath of this monster!" The king felt that he must resolve on parting with his child. He covered her with royal clothes, embraced her, and said, "Alas! dear daughter, I thought to have seen myself re-born in your offspring. I hoped to have invited princes to your wedding, to have adorned you with royal

garments, and accompanied you with flutes, tambourins, and all kinds of music; but you are to be devoured by this monster! Why did not I die before you?"

Then she fell at her father's feet and besought his blessing. He accorded it her, weeping, and he clasped her tenderly in his arms; then she went to the lake. George, who passed that way, saw her weeping, and asked the cause of her tears. She replied:—"Good youth! quickly mount your horse and fly, lest you perish with me." But George said to her:—"Do not fear; tell me what you await, and why all this multitude look on." She answered:—"I see that you have a great and noble heart; yet, fly!" "I shall not go without knowing the cause," he replied. Then she explained all to him; whereupon he exclaimed:—"Fear nothing! in the name of Jesus Christ, I will assist you." "Brave knight!" said she; "do not seek to die with me; enough that I should perish; for you can neither assist nor deliver me, and you will only die with me."

At this moment the monster rose above the surface of the water. And the virgin said, all trembling, "Fly, fly, sir knight!"

His only answer was the sign of the cross. Then

he advanced to meet the monster, recommending himself to God.

He brandished his lance with such force, that he transfixed it, and cast it to the ground. Then, addressing the princess, he bade her pass her girdle round it, and fear nothing. When this was done, the monster followed like a docile hound. When they had brought it into the town, the people fled before it; but George recalled them, bidding them put aside all fear, for the Lord had sent him to deliver them from the dragon. Then the king and all his people, twenty thousand men, without counting women and children, were baptized, and George smote off the head of the monster.

Other versions of the story are to the effect that the princess was shut up in a castle, and that all within were perishing for want of water, which could only be obtained from a fountain at the base of a hill, and this was guarded by the "laidly worm," from which George delivered them.

"The hero won his well-earn'd place
Amid the saints, in death's dread hour;
And still the peasant seeks his grace,
And next to God, reveres his power.

In many a church his form is seen
With sword, and shield, and helmet sheen:
Ye know him by his steed of pride,
And by the dragon at his side."

CHR. SCHMID.

The same story has attached itself to other saints and heroes of the middle ages, as S. Secundus of Asti, S. Victor, Gozo of Rhodes, Raimond of S. Sulpice, Struth von Winkelried, the Count Aymon, Moor of Moorhall, "who slew the dragon of Wantley," Conyers of Sockburn, and the Knight of Lambton, "John that slew ye Worme." Ariosto adopted it into his Orlando Furioso, and made his hero deliver Angelica from Orca, in the true mythic style of George [9]; and it appears again in the tale of Chederles [1]. The cause of the legend attaching itself to our hero, was possibly a misunderstanding of an encomium, made in memory of S. George, by Metaphrastes, which concludes thus: "Licebat igitur videre astutissimum Draconem, adversus carnem et sanguinem gloriari solitum, elatumque, et sese efferentem, a juvene uno illusum, et ita dispectum atque confusum, ut quid ageret non haberet." Another writer, summing up

[9] Orland. Fur. c. xi.

[1] Noël: Dict. de la Fable; art. Chederles.

the acts of S. George, says: "Secundo quod Draconem vicit qui significat Diabolum;" and Hospinian, relating the sufferings of the martyr, affirms distinctly that his constancy was the occasion of the creation of the legend by Voragine[2].

If we look at the story of Perseus and Andromeda, we shall find that in all essential particulars it is the same as that of the Cappadocian Saint.

Cassiope having boasted herself to be fairer than Hera, Poseidon sent a flood and a sea-monster, to ravage the country belonging to her husband Cepheus. The oracle of Ammon having been consulted, it was ascertained that nothing would stop the resentment of the gods except the exposure of the king's daughter, Andromeda, on a rock, to be devoured by the monster. At the moment that the dragon approached the maiden, Perseus appeared, and learning her peril, engaged the monster and slew him.

The scene of this conflict was near Joppa, where in the days of S. Jerome the bones of the huge reptile were exhibited, and Josephus pretends to have seen there the chains which attached the princess to the rock[3]. It was at Berytus (Beyrut)

[2] Christian Remembrancer, vol. xlv. p. 320.

[3] Hieron. Epist. 108. Joseph. Bell. Jud. iii. c. 7.

that the fight of S. George with the dragon took place.

Similar stories were prevalent in Greece. In the isle of Salamis, Cenchrius, a son of Poseidon, relieved the inhabitants from the scourge of a similar monster, who devastated the island. At Thespia, a dragon ravaged the country round the city; Zeus ordered the inhabitants to give the monster their children by lot. One year it fell on Cleostratus. Menestratus determined to save him. He armed himself with a suit covered with hooks, and was devoured by the dragon, which perished in killing him. Pherecydes killed a great serpent in Caulonia, an adventure afterwards related of Pythagoras, with the scene shifted to Sybaris; and Herakles, as is well known, slew Hydra. But these are all versions—echoes—of the principal myth of Apollo and Python.

The monster Python was sent by Hera to persecute Leto, when pregnant. Apollo, the moment that he was born, attacked the hideous beast and pierced him with his arrows. And from the place where the serpent died, there burst forth a torrent.

A similar myth is found among the Scandinavian and Teutonic nations. In these Northern myth-

ologies Apollo is replaced by Sigurd, Sigfried, and Beowulf.

The dragon with which Sigurd fights is Fafnir, who keeps guard over a treasure of gold. Sigfried, in like manner, in the Nibelungen Lied, fights and overcomes a mighty dragon, and despoils him of a vast treasure. The Anglo-Saxon poem of Beowulf contains a similar engagement. A monster Grendel haunts a marsh near a town on the North Sea. At night the evil spirit rises from the swamp, and flies to the mountains, attacking the armed men, and slaying them. Beowulf awakes, fights him, and puts him to flight. But next night Grendel again attacks him, but is killed by the hero with an enchanted sword. He fights a dragon some years later, and robs it of an incalculable store of gold. The Icelandic Sagas teem with similar stories; and they abound in all European household tales.

In the Rigveda we have the same story. Indra fights with the hideous serpent Ahi, or Vrita, who keeps guard over the fountain of rains. In Iranian mythology, the same battle is waged between Mithra and the dæmon Ahriman.

It seems, then, that the fight with the dragon is a myth common to all Aryan peoples.

Its signification is this :—

The maiden which the dragon attemps to devour is the earth. The monster is the storm-cloud. The hero who fights it is the sun, with his glorious sword, the lightning-flash. By his victory the earth is relieved from her peril. The fable has been varied to suit the atmospheric peculiarities of different climes in which the Aryans found themselves. In India, Vrita is coiled about the source of water, and the earth is perishing for want of rain, till pierced by the sword of Indra, when the streams descend. "I will sing," says the Rigveda, "the ancient exploits by which flashing Indra is distinguished. He has struck Ahi, he has scattered the waters on the earth, he has unlocked the torrents of the heavenly mountains (i. e., the clouds). He has struck Ahi, who lurked in the bosom of the celestial mountain, he has struck him with that sounding weapon wrought for him by Twachtri ; and the waters, like cattle rushing to their stable, have poured down on the earth[1]." And again :—

"O Indra, thou hast killed the violent Ahi, who withheld the waters!"

"O Indra, thou hast struck Ahi, sleeping guar-

[1] Rigveda, sect. i. lec. 2. p. xiii. Ed. Langlois, iii. p. 329.

dian of the waters, and thou hast precipitated them into the sea; thou hast pierced the compact scale of the cloud; thou hast given vent to the streams, which burst forth on all sides[5]."

Among the ancient Iranians the same myth prevailed, but was sublimated into a conflict between good and evil. Ahriman represents Ahi, and is the principle of evil; corrupted into Kharaman, it became the Armenian name for a serpent and the devil. Ahriman entered heaven in the shape of a dragon, was met by Mithra, conquered, and like the old serpent of Apocalyptic vision, "he shall be bound for three thousand years, and burned at the end of the world in melted metals[6]." Aschmogh (Asmodeus) is also the infernal serpent of the books of the Avesta; he is but another form of Ahriman. This fable rapidly followed in Persia the same process of application to known historical individuals that it pursued in Europe. In the ninth hymn of the Yaçna, Zoroaster asks

[5] Ibid. vol. i. p. 44; ii. p. 447. In the Katha Sarit Sagara, a hero fights a dæmon monster, and releases a beautiful woman from his thraldom. The story as told by Soma Deva has already progressed and assumed a form very similar to that of Perseus and Andromeda. Katha Sarit Sagara, book vii. c. 42.

[6] Boundehesch, ii. 251. 416.

Hōma who were the first of mortals to honour him, and Hōma replies: "The first of mortals to whom I manifested myself was Vivanghvat, father of Yima, under whom flourished the blessed age which knew not cold of winter, or scorching heat of summer, old age or death, or the hatred produced by the Devas. The second was Athwya, father of Thraetana, the conqueror of the dragon Dahak, with three heads, and three throats, and six eyes, and a thousand strengths." This Thraetana, in the Shahnāmeh, has become Feridun, who overcomes the great dragon Zohak.

In northern mythology, the serpent is probably the winter cloud, which broods over and keeps from mortals the gold of the sun's light and heat, till in the spring the bright orb overcomes the powers of darkness and tempest, and scatters his gold over the face of the earth. In the ancient Sagas of Iceland, the myth has assumed a very peculiar form, which, if it would not have protracted this article to an undue length, I should have been glad to have followed out. The hero descends into a tomb, where he fights a vampire, who has possession of a glorious sword, and much gold and silver. After a desperate struggle, the hero overcomes, and rises with the treasures to the surface

of the earth. This too, represents the sun in the northern realms, descending into the tomb of winter, and there overcoming the power of darkness, from whom he takes the sword of the lightning, and the treasures of fertility, wherewith the earth is blessed on the return of the sun to the skies in summer.

This is probably the ancient form of the Scandinavian myth, and the King of gloom reigning over his gold in the cairn, was only dragonized when the Norse became acquainted with the dragon myths of other nations. In the Saga of Hromund Greipson, the hero is let down by a rope into a barrow, into which he had been digging for six days. He found below the old king Thrain the Viking, with a kettle of quivering red flames suspended from the roof of the vault above him. This king, years before, had gathered all the treasures that he had obtained in a long life of piracy, and had suffered himself to be buried alive with his ill-gotten wealth. Hromund found him seated on a throne in full armour, girded with his sword, crowned, and with his feet resting on three boxes containing silver. We have the same story in the Gretla; only there the dead king is Karr the old; Grettir is led to open his cairn, by seeing flames dancing on the mound at night. In the struggle underground, Grettir and the vampire

stumble over the bones of the old king's horse, and thereby Grettir is able to get the upper hand.

Similar stories occur in the Flóamanna Saga, the younger Saga of Olaf the saint (cap. 16), the elder Olaf Saga (3—4), the history of Olaf Geirstafaalp, the Holmverja Saga, and the Bârda Saga. The last of these is strongly impressed with Christian influence, and gives indications of the transformation of the evil being into a dragon. Gest visited an island off the coast of Helluland (Labrador), where lay buried a grimly dæmon king Raknar. He took with him a priest with holy water and a crucifix. They had to dig fifty fathoms before they reached the chamber of the dead. Into this Gest descended by a rope, holding a sword in one hand, and a taper in the other. He saw below a great dragon-ship, in which sat five hundred men, champions of the old king, who were buried with him. They did not stir, but gazed with blank eyes at the taper flame, and snorted vapour from their nostrils. Gest despoiled the old king of all his gold and armour, and was about to rob him of his sword, when the taper expired. Then, at once, the five hundred rose from the dragon-ship, and the dæmon king rushed at him; they grappled and fought. In his need, Gest invoked S. Olaf,

who appeared with light streaming from his body, and illumining the interior of the cairn. Before this light, the power of the dead men failed, and Gest completed his work in the vault[7]. In the story of Sigurd and Fafnir, the dragon is more than half man; but in the battle of Gull-Thorir the creature is scaled and winged in the most approved Oriental style[8].

Let me place in apposition a few of the Aryan myths relating to the strife between the sun and the dæmon of darkness, or storm.

Indian myth. Indra fights Ahi.

Indra kills Ahi, who is identified with the storm-cloud, and releases from him the pent-up waters, for want of which the earth is perishing. Ahi a serpent.

Persian myth. Mithra and Ahriman.

Mithra is clearly identical with the sun, and Ahriman with darkness. Ahriman a dragon.

Greek myth. Apollo and Python; Perseus and the sea-monster.

Apollo identical with the sun, Python the storm-cloud. Apollo delivers his mother from the assault of the dragon.

[7] Bârdar S. Snæfellsass. Kjobnhavn. 1860. pp. 41—43.
[8] Gull-Thoris Saga. Leipzig, 1858. c. iv.

Perseus delivers Andromeda from the water-born serpent. In other Greek fables it is the earth which is saved from destruction by the victory of the hero.

Teutonic myth. Sigfried and the dragon.

Sigfried conquers the dragon who keeps guard over a hidden treasure, the hero kills the dragon and brings to light the treasure.

Scandinavian myth. Sigurd and Fafnir.

Like the myth of Sigfried. Other, and perhaps earlier form, the dragon is a king of Hades, who cannot endure light, and who has robbed the earth of its gold. The hero descends to his realm, fights, overcomes him, and despoils him of his treasures.

Christian myth. S. George and dragon.

S. George delivers a princess from a monster, who is about to devour her. According to another version, the dragon guards the spring of water, and the country is languishing for want of water; S. George restores to the land the use of the spring by slaying the dragon.

This table might have been considerably extended by including Keltic and Sclavonic fables, but it is sufficiently complete to show that the legend of S. George and the dragon forms part of one of

the sacred myths of the Aryan family, and it is impossible not to grasp its signification in the light cast upon it by the Vedic poems.

And when we perceive how popular this venerable myth was in heathen nations of Europe, it is not surprising that it should perpetuate itself under Christianity, and that, when once transferred to a hero of the new creed, it should make that hero one of the most venerated and popular of all the saints in the calendar.

In the reign of Constantine the Great, there existed a great and beautiful church between Ramula, the ancient Arimathæa, and Lydda or Decapolis, dedicated by the Emperor to S. George, over his tomb. Ramula also bore the name of Georgia, and the inhabitants pretended that the warrior saint was a native of their town. A temple of Juno at Constantinople was converted into a church, with the same dedication, by the first Christian Emperor, and according to one tradition, the bones of the martyr were translated from his tomb near Lydda, to the church in the great city of Constantine. At an early date his head was in Rome, or at all events one of his heads, for another found its way to the church of Mares-Moutier, in Picardy, after the capture of Byzantium

by the Turks, when it was taken from a church erected by Constantine Monomachus, dedicated to the saint. The Roman head, long forgotten, was rediscovered in 751, with an inscription on it which identified it with S. George. In 1600 it was given to the church of Ferrara. In Rome, at Palermo, and at Naples there were churches at a very early date, consecrated to the martyr. In 509 Clotilda founded a nunnery at Chelles in his honour; and Clovis II. placed a convent at Barala under his invocation. In this religious house was preserved an arm of S. George, which in the ninth century was transported to Cambray; and fifty years later S. Germain dedicated an altar in Paris to the champion. In the sixth century a church was erected to his honour at Mayence; Clothaire in the following century dedicated one at Nimègue, and his brother another in Alsace. George had a monastery dedicated to him at Thetford, founded in the reign of Canute; a collegiate church in Oxford placed under his invocation in the reign of the Conqueror. S. George's, Southwark, dates from before the Norman invasion. The priory church of Griesly in Derbyshire was dedicated to SS. Mary and George, in the reign of Henry I. The Crusades gave an impetus to the worship

of our patron. He appeared in light on the walls of Jerusalem, waving his sword, and led the victorious assault on the Holy City. Unobtrusively he and S. Michael slipped into the offices, and exercised the functions, of the Dioscuri. Robert of Flanders, on his return from the Holy Land, presented part of an arm of the saint to the city of Toulouse, and other portions to the Countess Matilda and to the abbey of Auchin. Another arm of S. George fell miraculously from heaven upon the altar of S. Pantaleon at Cologne, and in honour of it Bishop Anno founded a church.

The church of Villers-Saint-Leu contains relics of the saint, which were given to it in 1101 by Alexander, chaplain of Count Ernest, who had received them from Baldwin at Jerusalem.

The enthusiasm of the Crusaders for the Eastern soldier-saint who led them to battle, soon raised S. George to the highest pitch of popularity among the nobles and fighting-men of Europe. England, Aragon, and Portugal assumed him as their patron, as well as most chivalrous orders founded at the date of these wars. In 1245, on S. George's day, Frederic of Austria instituted an order of knighthood under his patronage; and its banner, white charged with a blood-red cross, in battle floated

alongside of that of the empire. When the emperor entered the castle of S. Angelo at Rome, these two banners were carried before him. The custody of the sacred standard of S. George was confided to the Swabian knights. In the early part of the thirteenth century there existed a military order under the protection of S. George at Genoa, and in 1201 an order was founded in Aragon, with the title of knights of S. George of Alfama.

In 1348 King Edward III. founded S. George's Chapel, Windsor. In the following year he was besieging Calais. Moved by a sudden impulse, says Thomas of Walsingham, he drew his sword with the exclamation "Ha! Saint Edward! Ha! Saint George!" The words and action communicated spirit to his soldiers: they fell with vigour on the French, and routed them with a slaughter of two hundred soldiers. From that time S. George replaced Edward the Confessor as patron of England. In 1350 the celebrated order was instituted. In 1415, by the Constitutions of Archbishop Chichely, S. George's Day was made a major double feast, and ordered to be observed the same as Christmas Day, all labour ceasing;

and he received the title of spiritual patron of the English soldiery.

In 1545 S. George's Day was observed as a red letter day, with proper Collect, Epistle, and Gospel; but in the reign of Edward VI. it was swept away, and the holding of the chapter of the garter on S. George's Day was transferred to Whitsun Eve, Whitsun Day, and Whitsun Monday. Next year, the first of Queen Mary, the enactment was reversed, and since then the ancient custom has obtained, and the chapter is held annually on the feast of the patron.

In concluding this paper, it remains only to point out the graceful allegory which lies beneath the Western fable. S. George is any Christian who is sealed at his baptism to be "Christ's faithful soldier and servant unto his life's end," and armed with the breastplate of righteousness, the shield of the faith, marked with its blood-red cross, the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word or power of God.

The hideous monster against whom the Christian soldier is called to fight is that "old serpent, the devil," who withholds or poisons the streams of grace, and who seeks to rend and devour

the virgin soul, in whose defence the champion fights.

If the warfare symbolized by this legend be carried out in life, then, in Spenser's words—

> " Thou, amongst those saints whom thou doest see,
> Shall be a saint, and thine owne nations frend
> And patrone: thou Saint George shalt called bee,
> Saint George of mery England, the sign of victoree."

S. Ursula and the Eleven Thousand Virgins

IN reading the Germania of Tacitus, with a view to the study of Teutonic mythology, I lit upon a passage so perplexing, that I resolved to minutely investigate it, and trace its connexion with other statements, and examine its bearings, little knowing whither it would lead. That passage shall be quoted in the sequel. Suffice it to say here, that it guided me to the legend of S. Ursula and her virgin company of martyrs.

At this point I became acquainted with the masterly treatise of Dr. Oskar Schade, of Bonn, on the story of S. Ursula [1], and was agreeably surprised to find that, proceeding from the point at which I had arrived, he had been guided by sure stages to that from which I had started.

[1] Die Sage von der Heiligen Ursula, von Oskar Schade. Hanover, 1854.

As my object in these pages is the analysis of a Christian myth, I shall follow the Doctor's course rather than my own. The fable of S. Ursula is too important to be omitted from this collection of Myths, because of the extravagance of its details, the devotion which it excited, the persistency with which the Church clings to it, setting all her scenery in motion to present the tragedy in its most imposing and probable aspect. It may not be omitted also because it is a specimen of the manner in which saintly legends were developed in the Middle Ages, the process of the development being unusually evident; a specimen, lastly, of the manner in which they were generated out of worse than nothing; a process which is also, in this case, singularly apparent.

The legends of the Middle Ages were some beautiful, some grotesque, some revolting. The two latter classes we put aside at once, but for the first we profess a lingering affection. Alas! too often they are but apples of Sodom, fair cheeked, but containing the dust and ashes of heathenism.

Ursula and the eleven thousand British virgins are said to have suffered martyrdom at Cologne, on October 21st, 237; for in 1837 was celebrated with splendor the 16th centenary jubilee of their

passion. They suffered under the Huns, on their return from their defeat at Chalons by Aëtius in 451; so that the anachronism is considerable. The early martyrology of Jerome, published by d'Achery, makes no mention of S. Ursula; neither does that of the Venerable Bede, who was born in 672. Bede states that he has included all the names of which he read: as Ursula was a British lady of rank, and was accompanied to martyrdom by the enormous number of eleven thousand damsels, who shared with her the martyr's crown and palm, it is singular and significant that Bede should not allude to this goodly company. The Martyrologium Gallinense, a compilation made in 804, does not include her; nor does the Vetus Calendarium Corbeiense, composed in or about 831. Neither is she mentioned in the Martyrology of Rabanus Maurus, who died in 856. Usardus, who wrote about 875, does not speak of her, though under the 20th October he inserts the passion of the holy virgins, Martha and Saula, with many others in the city of Cologne. S. Ado wrote a martyrology in 880, but makes no mention of Ursula and the other virgins; nor does Notker of S. Gall, who died in 912; nor, again, does the Corbey martyrology of 900; neither do the two of

uncertain date called after Labbe and Richenove. We see that up to the tenth century, for either 650 or 450 years after the martyrdom, there is no mention of S. Ursula by name, and only one reference to virgin martyrs at Cologne. Usardus, who mentions these, gives the names of Martha and Saula. An old calendar in the Dusseldorf town library, belonging to the tenth century, copies Usardus, merely transferring the saints to the 21st October. A litany of the following century, in the Darmstadt library, invokes five, in this order: Martha, Saula, Paula, Brittola, Ursula. Another litany in the same collection raises their number to eight, and gives a different succession: Brittola, Martha, Saula, Sambatia, Saturnina, Gregoria, Pinnosa, Palladia. Another litany, in the Dusseldorf library, extends the number to eleven: Ursula, Sencia, Gregoria, Pinnosa, Martha, Saula, Brittola, Saturnina, Rabacia, Saturia, Palladia. And, again, another gives eleven, but in different order: Martha, Saula, Brittola, Gregoria, Saturnina, Sabatia, Pinnosa, Ursula, Sentia, Palladia, Saturia.

A calendar in a Freisingen Codex, published in Eckhart's Francia Orientalis, notices them as *SS. M. XI. Virginum.* And, lastly, in the twelfth

century the chronicle of Rodulf (written 1117) reckons the virgin martyrs as twelve.

But S. Cunibert (d. 663) is related, in a legend of the ninth century, to have been celebrating in the church of the Blessed Virgins, when a white dove appeared, and indicated the spot where lay the relics of one of the martyrs: these were, of course at once exhumed.

In the ninth century there was a cloister of the blessed virgins at Cologne: this is also alluded to in the tenth and following centuries. The first, however, to develope the number of martyrs to any very considerable extent, was Wandalbert, in his metrical list of saints. This was written about 851. He does not mention Ursula by name, but reckons the virgins who suffered as "thousands."

> "Tunc numerosa simul Rheni per littora fulgent
> Christo virgineis erecta trophæa maniplis
> Agrippinæ urbi, quarum furor impius olim
> Millia mactavit ductricibus inclyta sanctis."

The authenticity of these lines has, however, been questioned by critics.

The next mention of the virgins as very numerous is in a calendar of the latter end of the ninth century, in which, under October 21st, are commemorated S. Hilario and the eleven thousand

virgins. Archbishop Hermann of Cologne, in 922, also speaks of this number. In 927 and 941 Archbishop Wichfried reckons them at eleven thousand, and from that time the belief in the virgin saints having numbered eleven thousand spread gradually through Europe.

Various suggestions have been made to account for this extraordinary number. By some it has been supposed that Undecimilla was the name of one of the martyrs, and that the entry in the ancient calendars of *Ursula et Undecimilla Virg. Mart.*, originated the misconception; and, in fact, one missal, supposed to be old, has a similar commemoration; whilst an inscription at Spiers, according to Rettberg, mentions Ursula et Decumilia. Johann Sprenz believed that the mistake arose from the use, in the old MSS. martyrologies and calendars, of the Teutonic Gimartarôt, or Kimartrôt (passus), which, standing S. Ursula Ximartor, might have led later writers to have taken the entry to signify S. Ursula, et XI. Martor. Or, again, if the number of the virgins were eleven, they may have been entered as SS. XI. M. Virgines, or the eleven martyr-virgins, and the M. have been mistaken in a later age for a numeral. Against this it is urged that in no ancient calendar

does the M. precede the Virg.; the usual manner of describing these saints being SS. M. XI. Virg., till the number rose at a leap to eleven thousand.

As yet we have had no circumstances relating to these ladies, but with the tenth century they begin to appear. Sigebert of Gemblours (d. 1112) is the first author to narrate them. Under the date 453, he reports the glorious victory of the Virgin Ursula. She was the only daughter of Nothus, an illustrious and wealthy British prince, and was sought in marriage by the son of a "certain most ferocious tyrant." Ursula had, however, dedicated herself to celibacy, and her father was in great fear of offending God by consenting to the union, and of exasperating the king by refusing it. However, the damsel solved the difficulty: by Divine inspiration, she persuaded her father to agree to the proposal of the tyrant, but only subject to the condition that her father and the king should choose ten virgins of beauty and proper age, and should give them to her, and that she and they should each have a thousand damsels under them, and that on eleven triremes they should be suffered to cruize about for three years in the sanctity of unsullied virginity. Ursula made this condition in the hopes that the difficulty of fulfilling it would prove insurmountable, or that she

might be able, should it be overcome, to persuade a vast host of maidens to devote themselves to the Almighty.

The tyrant succeeded in mustering the desired number, and then presented them to Ursula, together with eleven elegantly furnished galleys. For three years these damsels sailed the blue seas. One day the wind drove them into the port of Tiela, in Gaul, and thence up the Rhine to Cologne. Thence they pursued their course to Basle, where they left their ships, and crossed the Alps on foot, descended into Italy, and visited the tombs of the Apostles at Rome. In like manner they returned, but, falling in with the Huns at Cologne, they were every one martyred by the barbarians.

This story bears evidence of being an addition to the original text of Sigebert's Chronicle, for it is not to be found in the original MS. in the handwriting of the author, though marks of stitches at the side of the page indicate that an additional item had been appended, but by whom, or when, is not clear, as the strip of parchment which had been tacked on is lost.

Otto of Freisingen (d. 1158) mentions the legend in his Chronicle ; for he says, " This army (of the Huns) when overrunning the earth, crowned with

martyrdom the eleven thousand virgins at Cologne."

A legend of the twelfth century, given by Surius, invests the story with all the colours of a romance. In the same century it appears in the marvellous history of Geoffrey of Monmouth (d. 1154). Whether this legend was in the Welsh book of Walter the Archdeacon, from which the good Bishop of S. Asaph derived so much of his history, does not appear. The story, as told by him, differs materially from that received in Germany. He relates that the Emperor Maximian, having depopulated Northern Gaul, sent to Britain for colonies wherewith to re-people the waste country. Thus out of Armorica he made a second Britain, which he put under the control of Conan Meriadoc. He then turned his arms eastward, and, having established himself at Treves, commenced hostilities against the emperors Gratian and Valentinian, who disputed with him the imperial purple. In the meanwhile Conan was defending Brittany against the incursions of the neighbouring Gauls, but, finding that his troops would not settle without wives, he sent to Britain for a cargo of damsels, who might become the spouses of his soldiers, and raise up another generation of fighting men to continue the war with the Gauls. At this

time there reigned in Cornwall a king, Dionotus by name, who had succeeded his brother Caradoc on the throne. He was blessed with a daughter of singular beauty, named Ursula, whose hand Conan desired to obtain. Dionotus, having received a message from the prince of Armorica stating his difficulties, at once collected a body of eleven thousand girls of noble rank, and sixty thousand of low birth, and shipped them on the Thames for the Armorican colony of expectant husbands.

No sooner, however, had the fleet left the mouth of the Thames, than it was scattered by the winds, and, some of the vessels having been driven ashore on barbarous island coasts, the damsels were either killed or enslaved; some became the prey of the execrable army of Guanius and Melga, kings of the Huns and Picts, who, falling upon the band of luckless virgins, massacred them without compunction.

It is evident that Geoffrey did not regard this legend as invested with sanctity, and he tells it as an historical, and not a hagiological fact.

In 1106 Cologne was besieged, and the walls in several places were battered down. Directly the enemy were gone, the inhabitants began to rebuild them; and, as the foundations had suffered, they were compelled to relay them.

Now it happened that the old walls ran across the ancient cemetery of the Roman settlement of Colonia Agrippina. Consequently in redigging the foundations a number of bones were discovered, especially at one spot. Thereupon some ecstatic or excitable visionary beheld two females in a halo of light, who indicated the bones as those of the virgin martyrs. Immediately enthusiasm was aroused, and the cemetery was examined. Innumerable bones were found, together with urns, arms, stone cists, and monumental inscriptions. The old Roman cemetery became a quarry of relics, apparently inexhaustible. But in the midst of the religious enthusiasm of the clergy and devotees of Cologne, a sudden difficulty occurred, which produced bewilderment in the faithful, and mockery in the unbelieving. A large number of bones and inscriptions belonging to men were discovered; thus a Simplicius, a Pantulus, an Aetherius, were commemorated on the slabs exhumed, and the great size of some of the tibia rendered it certain that they had never belonged to slender virgins.

In the midst of the dismay reigning in the breasts of the good Catholics at this untoward discovery, appeared, most opportunely, an ecstatic nun, Elizabeth by name, who resided in the convent of

Schönau. This visionary solved the difficulty, to the great edification of the faithful. She fell into trances, during which she was vouchsafed wondrous revelations, which she detailed in Latin to her brother Egbert, who alone was suffered to be present during her ecstasies. According to her account, the Pope Cyriacus, the cardinals of Rome, several bishops, priests, and monks, had been so edified at the sight of the holy virgins in Rome, that they had followed them on their return as far as Cologne, where they, as well as the damsels, had won the martyr's palm.

Thus, in a most satisfactory way, the presence of these male bones was accounted for, and no scandal attached to the chaste troop of male and female celibates which had crossed the Alps, and descended the Rhine, to fall before the sword of the barbarian. Simplicius was ascertained to have been Archbishop of Ravenna, Pantulus to have been Bishop of Basle, and Aetherius proved to have been the bridegroom elect of Ursula, who had been converted to Christianity, and had come up the Rhine to meet his saintly betrothed.

A little difficulty occurred on another point. How was it that the martyrs were provided with stone coffins and sepulchral slabs?

In order to explain this, another incident was added to the legend by the vision-seeing nun.

Jacobus, Archbishop of Antioch, a Briton by birth, had gone to Rome to visit Cyriacus the Pope, but had learned, on his arrival, that his holiness had been last seen clambering the Alps in the train of eleven thousand virgins of entrancing beauty. The Eastern patriarch at once followed the successor of S. Peter, and reached Cologne on the morrow of the great massacre. He thereupon cut the names and titles of many of the deceased on stone—how he ascertained their names is not stated; but, before he had accomplished his task, the Huns discovered him engaged in his pious work, and dispatched him.

Doubt and disbelief were now silenced, and the ecstatic nun, having finished her revelations concerning the eleven thousand, died in the odour of sanctity.

Scarcely was she dead before fresh discoveries in the old cemetery reopened the scandal.

A considerable number of children's bones were exhumed, and some of these belonged to infants but a few months old. This was a startling and awkward discovery, seriously compromising to the memories of the Pope, cardinals, and prelates who had accompanied the young ladies from Rome, and

arousing a suspicion that the damsels had not been the sole managers of their vessels on the high seas, as the early legends had stated.

The nun, Elizabeth of Schönau, was dead. Who was there then to clear the characters of these glorious martyrs?

Fortunately, an old Præmonstratine monk, named Richard, an Englishman, lived in the diocese of Cologne, in the abbey of Arnsberg. He was keenly alive to the slur cast upon the fair fame of his national saints, and, by means of visions, laboured effectively to vindicate it. He declared that the eleven thousand had excited such enthusiasm in England, that their married relations had accompanied them in the vessels, with their children of all ages, and that all together had received the martyr's crown. Richard added that a Sicilian princess, Gerasina, had accompanied the pilgrims, together with her four daughters and baby son; also that an empress of the Eastern empire, Constantia by name, had suffered with them. Kings, princes, and princesses, of Norway, Sweden, Ireland, Flanders, Normandy, Brabant, Friesland, Denmark —in a word, of all lands with which a geographer of the twelfth century was acquainted—had joined the expedition, in their desire to testify their admira-

tion of the chastity and piety of Ursula and her companions. Holofernes, bridegroom elect of Ursula, notwithstanding his father's opposition, insisted on taking command of the fleet. Under him were three hundred sailors who manned the vessels.

Such is the history of the expansion and final development of this curious fable. It exhibits a series of misconceptions and impostures, we should hope, unparalleled. To this day the church of S. Ursula at Cologne is visited by thousands who rely on the intercession of a saint who never existed, and believe in the miraculous virtues of relics which are those of pagans.

But something worse remains to be told.

Ursula is no other than the Swabian goddess Ursel or Hörsel transformed into a saint of the Christian calendar.

"A part of the Suevi sacrifice to Isis," says Tacitus, in his Germania. This Isis has been identified by Grimm with a goddess Ziza, who was worshipped by the inhabitants of the parts about Augsburg. Küchlen, an Augsburg poet of the fourteenth century, sings—

> "They built a great temple therein,
> To the honour of Zise the heathen goddess,

Whom they after heathen customs
Worshipped at that time:
The city was named eke Zisaris,
After the heathen goddess; that was its glory.
The temple long stood entire,
Until its fall was caused by age."

But it may be questioned whether Tacitus called the goddess worshipped by the Suevi, Isis, because the name resembled that of the German deity, or whether he so termed her because he traced a similarity in the myths and worship of the two goddesses. I believe the latter to have been the case. The entire passage reads, "They chiefly worship Mercury, to whom on certain days they sacrifice human beings. They appease Hercules and Mars with beasts, and part of the Suevi sacrifice to Isis. Whence the cause and origin of the foreign rite I have not ascertained, except that the symbol itself, in shape of a Liburnian ship, indicates that the religion was brought from abroad[2]."

Here, in the same sentence, three of the German gods are called by Roman names. Mercury is Woden: Hercules, or Mars, is Thorr. It is, therefore, probable that the fourth, Isis, is named from a resemblance of attributes, rather than identity of name. Again, in connexion with the mention of

[2] Tacitus, Germania, ix.

Isis, he alludes to a rite observed by the Suevi of carrying about a ship in her honour. Now, in Rome, the 5th March (III. Non. Mart.) was called, in the Kalendarium Rusticum, the day of the *Isidis navigium*. This is referred to by Apulëius in his Metamorphoses. The goddess appeared to the poor ass, and said, "The morrow that from the present night will have its birth is a day that eternal religion hath appointed as a holy festival, at a period when, the tempests of winter having subsided, the waves of the stormy sea abated, and the surface of the ocean become navigable, my priests dedicate to me a new ship, laden with the first-fruits of spring, at the opening of the navigation" (Lib. xi.). To this alludes also Lactantius [3].

The myth of Isis and her wanderings is too well known to be related. Now it is certain that in parts of Germany the custom of carrying about a ship existed through the Middle Ages to the present day, and was denounced by the Church as idolatrous. Grimm [4] mentions a very curious passage in the Chronicle of Rodulph, wherein it is related that, in 1133, a ship was secretly constructed in a forest at Inda, and was placed on

[3] Lactant. Instit. i. 27.
[4] Deutsche Myth. i. 237.

wheels, and rolled by the weavers to Aix, then to Maestricht, and elsewhere, amidst dances, and music, and scenes which the pious chronicler refrains from describing. That it was regarded with abhorrence by the clergy, is evident from the epithets employed in describing it: navim infausto omine compactum—gentilitatis studium—profanas simulacri excubias—maligni spiritus qui in illa ferebantur—infausti ominis monstrum; and the like.

At Ulm, in Swabia, in 1530, the people were forbidden the carrying about of ploughs and ships on Shrove Tuesday. A like prohibition was decreed at Tübingen on the 5th March, 1584, against a similar practice. I have myself, on two occasions, seen ships dragged through the streets on wheels, upon Shrove Tuesday, at Mannheim on the Rhine. In Brussels is celebrated, I believe to this day, a festival called the Ommegank, in which a ship is drawn through the town by horses, with an image of the Blessed Virgin upon it, in commemoration of a miraculous figure of our Lady which came in a boat from Antwerp to Brussels.

Sometimes the ship was replaced by a plough, and the rustic ceremony of Plough Monday in England is a relic of the same religious rite performed in honour of the Teutonic Isis.

This great goddess was known by different names among the various peoples of Germany. She may have been the same as Zisca, but, as we know absolutely nothing of the myth and attributes of that deity, we cannot decide with certainty. More probably she was the Holda, or Holle, who still holds sway over the imagination of the German peasantry.

Now Holda is the great pale lady who glides through the sky at night, in whose dark courts are many thousand bright-eyed damsels, all, like her, pure; all, with her, suffering eclipse.

"Siderum regina bicornis audi
Luna puellas.
O Ursula! Princess among thy thousands of virgins,
Pray for us!"

Holda, or the Moon, is thé wandering Isis, or Ursula, whom German poets love still to regard as sailing over heaven's deep in her silver boat. As—

"Seh' ziehen die Wolke mit der Brust voll Segen,
Des Mondes Kahn im Meer der Nächte prangen."
ANAST. GRÜN.

Or—

"Es schimmert, wie der Silberkahn,
Der dort am Himmel strahlt."
VON STOLBERG.

Holda, in Teutonic mythology, is a gentle lady

with a sad smile on her countenance, ever accompanied by the souls of maidens and children, which are under her care. She sits in a mountain of crystal, surrounded by her bright-eyed maidens, and comes forth to scatter on earth the winter snow, or to revive the spring earth, or bless the fruits of autumn. This company of virgins surrounding her in the crystal vault of heaven is that described by Æschylus: *Ἄστρων κάτοιδα νυκτέρων ὁμήγυριν* (Agam. v. 4).

The kindly Holda was in other parts called Gôde, under which name she resembled Artemis, as the heavenly huntress accompanied by her maidens. In Austria and Bavaria she was called Perchta, or Bertha (the shining), and was supposed to have horns like Isis or Io, other lunar goddesses. But in Swabia and Thuringia she was represented by Hörsel or Ursul.

This Hörsel, in other places called the night bird Tutösel, haunted the Venusberg into which Tanhäuser plunged. She lived there in the midst of her numerous troop of damsels, to assist the laborious farmer and bless faithful lovers, or to allure to herself those souls which still clung to the ancient faith. A beautiful and benignant goddess the peasantry ever regarded her, little

heeding the brand put upon her pure brow by an indignant clergy, who saw in her only the Roman Venus in her grossest character, and not Aphrodite, the foam-begotten moon, rising silvery above the frothing sea.

Further this legend shall not lead us. Its history is painful.

That ancient myths should have penetrated and coloured Mediæval Christianity is not to be wondered at, for old convictions are not eradicated in the course of centuries. I shall, in this book, instance several cases in which they have left their impress on modern Protestant mythology. But it is sad that the Church should have lent herself to establish this fable by the aid of fictitious miracles and feigned revelations. And now, when minds weary with groping after truth, and not finding it in science, philosophy, and metaphysics, turn to the Church with yearning look, why should she repel them from clasping the Cross, which, in spite of all fables, "will stand whilst the world rolls," by her tenacity in clinging to these idle and foolish tales, founded on paganism, and buttressed with fraud?

Is this cultus of Ursula and her eleven thousand nothing but a "pious belief"? A pious belief,

which can trust in the moon and the myriad stars, and invoke them as saints in Paradise! "If I beheld . . . the moon walking in brightness; and my heart hath been secretly enticed, or my mouth hath kissed my hand: this also were an iniquity to be punished by the judge: for I should have denied the God that is above" (Job xxxi. 26—28).

It is Truth which men yearn for now; and sacred Truth, when taught by a mouth which lends itself to utter cunningly devised fables, is not listened to.

If the Catholic Church abroad would only purge herself of these, her grand eternal doctrines would be embraced by thousands. But the fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge.

The bibliography of the legend must be briefly discussed. It is not of remarkable interest.

The revelations of Elizabeth of Schönau, and those of Hermann, Joseph of Steinfeld, will be found in Surius, "Vita Sanctorum," under October 21st.

"Epistola ad virgines Christi univ. super hystoria nova undecim milimum (sic!) virginum," without place and date, but belonging to the latter end of the fifteenth century, is very rare: I have not seen it.

"Hjstoria vndecim milium virginum breviori atque faciliori modo pulcerrime collecta." Colon. 1509, 4to. Very scarce also.

"De Legende, vn hystorie der XI dusent jonferen, s. l. et a." (circ. 1490), a curious Low German legend, illustrated with quaint engravings, forty in number.

De S. Lory, "Sainte Ursule triomphante des cœurs, de l'enfer, de l'empire, Patrone du célèbre collége de Sorbonne," Paris, 1666, 4to. The legend has been carefully analyzed by Rettberg, in his "Deutschlands Kirchengeschichte," i. pp. 111—123.

Crombach broke a lance in honour of the eleven thousand in 1647: his work, "Ursula Vindicata," Colon. 1647, fol., with three maps, is interesting as containing documentary evidence; but it is disfigured by the superstition of the writer.

Leo, J. G., "*ἀποσκίασμα* hist.-antiquarium de 11,000 virginibus." Leucopetræ, 1721, 4to. Reischert, L., "Lebens-Geschichte u. Märtyrtod der N. Ursula." Cologne, 1837, 8vo.

Heinen, E. M. J., "Leben, Fahrt, u. Märtyrtod der h. Ursula." Cologne, 1838, 8vo. Scheben, A., "Leben der h. Ursula." Cologne, 1850, 8vo.

Schade, Oskar, "Die Sage v. der h. Ursula,"

Hanover, 1854, 8vo. Also a beautiful series of illustrations of the legend copied from the interesting paintings in the church at Cologne, published by Kellerhoven, "La légende de S. Ursula." Leipzig, 1861.

Some curious stories of the appearances of the sacred virgin companions of Ursula, and of the marvels wrought by their bones, occur in Cæsarius of Heisterbach's gossiping Dialogue of Miracles.

The Legend of the Cross

Ω ξύλον, ᾧ μακαριστὸν, ἐφ' ᾧ Θεὸς ἐξετανύσθη.
Sibyll. vi. 26.

IN the year 1850 chance led me to the discovery of a Gallo-Roman palace at Pont d'Oli (Pons Aulæ), near Pau, in the south of France. I was able to exhume the whole of the ruins, and to bring to light one of the most extensive series of mosaic pavements extant.

The remains consisted of a mansion two hundred feet long, paved throughout with mosaic: it was divided into summer and winter apartments; the latter heated by means of hypocausts, and of small size; the former very large, and opening on to a corridor above the river, once adorned with white marble pillars, having capitals of the Corinthian order. One of the first portions of the palace to be examined was the atrium, out of which, on the

west, opened the tablinum, a semi-circular chamber panelled with alabaster and painted.

The atrium contained a large quadrangular tank or impluvium, the dwarf walls of which were encased in variegated Pyrenean marbles. On the west side of the impluvium, below the step of the tablinum, the pavement represented five rows of squares. The squares in the first, third, and fifth rows were filled with a graceful pattern composed of curves. In the second and fourth rows, however, every fourth square contained a distinctly characterized red cross on white ground, with a delicate white spine down the middle (Fig. 2). Some few of these crosses had a black floriation in the angles, much resembling that met with in Gothic crosses (Fig. 4). Immediately in front of the tablinum, on the dwarf wall of the impluvium, stood the altar to the Penates, which was found. The corresponding pavement on the east of the impluvium was similar in design to the other, but the S. George's crosses were replaced by those of S. Andrew, each limb terminating either in a heart-shaped leaf or a trefoil (Figs. 1, 5). The design on the north and south was different, and contained no crosses. The excavations to the north led to the summer apartment. The most northerly chamber measured 26

feet by 22 feet; it was not only the largest, but evidently the principal room of the mansion, for the pavement was the most elaborate and beautiful. It was bordered by an exquisite running pattern of vines and grape bunches, springing from four drinking vessels in the centres of the north, south, east, and west sides. The pattern within this border was of circles, containing conventional roses alternately folded and expanded. This design was, however, rudely interrupted by a monstrous cross,

measuring 19 feet 8 inches by 13 feet, with its head towards the south, and its foot at the head of a flight of marble steps descending into what we were

unable to decide whether it was a bath or a vestibule. The ground of the cross was white; the limbs were filled with cuttle, lobsters, eels, oysters, and fish, swimming as though in their natural element; but the centre, where the arms intersected, was occupied by a gigantic bust of Neptune with his trident. The flesh was represented red; the hair, and beard, and trident were a blue-black. The arms of the figure did not show: a line joining the lower edge of the transverse limbs of the cross cut the figure at the breast, leaving the head and shoulders above. The resemblance to a crucifix was sufficiently remarkable to make the labourers exclaim, as they uncovered it, "C'est le bon Dieu, c'est Jésus!" and they regarded the trident as the centurion's spear. A neighbouring curé satisfied himself that the pavement was laid down in conscious prophecy of Christianity, and he pointed to the chalices and grapes as symbolizing the holy Eucharist, and the great cross, at the head of what we believed to be a circular bath, as typical of Christian baptism. With regard to the cross, the following laws seem to have governed its representation in the Gallo-Roman villa:—

The S. George's cross occupied the place of honour in the chief room, and at the head of this

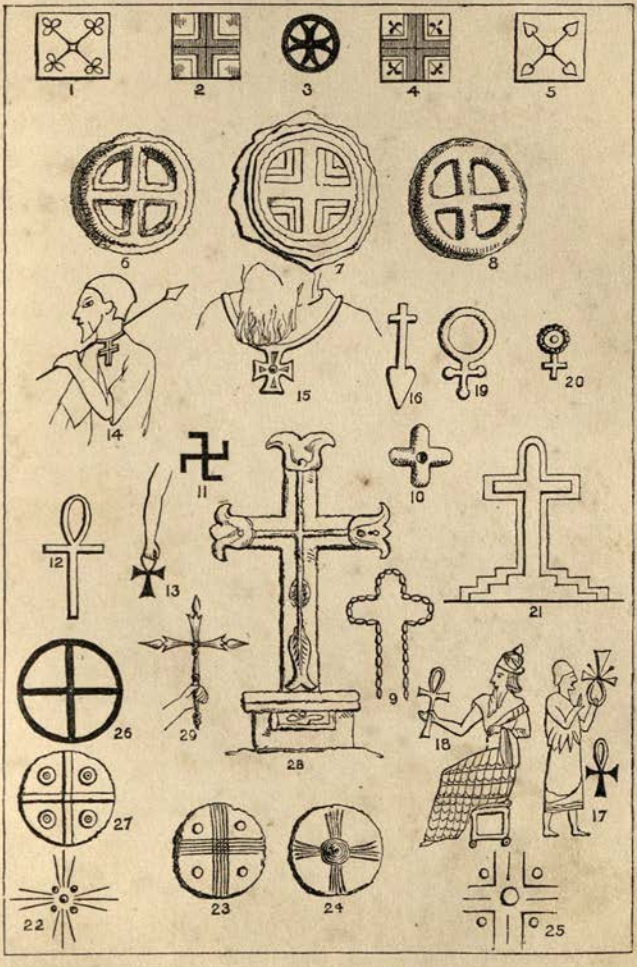
room, not in the middle, but near the bath or porch. Again, in the atrium this cross was repeated twenty times in the principal place before the tablinum and altar of the household divinities, and again in connexion with water. Its colour was always red or white.

Six varieties of crosses occurred in the villa (Figs. 1—5): the S. George's cross plain; the same with foliations in the angles; the same inhabited by fish, and bust of Neptune: the Maltese cross: the S. Andrew's cross with trefoiled ends; the same with heart-shaped ends.

On the discovery of the villa, several theories were propounded to explain the prominence given to the cross in the mosaics.

It was conjectured by some that the Neptune crucifix was a satire upon the Christians. To this it was objected that the figure was too large and solemn, and was made too prominent, to be so taken; that to the cross was assigned the place of honour; and that, independently of the bust of the sea-god, it was connected by the artists with the presence of water.

It was supposed by others that the villa had belonged to a Christian, and that the execution of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his design in the pavement had been entrusted to pagans, who, through ignorance, had substituted the head of Neptune for that of the Saviour.

Such a solution, though possible, is barely probable.

My own belief is, that the cross was a sacred sign among the Gaulish Kelts, and that the villa at Pau had belonged to a Gallo-Roman, who introduced into it the symbol of the water-god of his national religion, and combined it with the representation of the marine deity of the conquerors' creed.

My reasons for believing the cross to have been a Gaulish sign are these:—

The most ancient coins of the Gauls were circular, with a cross in the middle; little wheels, as it were, with four large perforations (Figs. 6, 7, 8). That these *rouelles* were not designed to represent wheels is apparent from there being only four spokes, placed at right angles. Moreover, when the coins of the Greek type took their place, the cross was continued as the ornamentation of the coin. The gold and silver Greek pieces circulating at Marseilles were the cause of the abandonment of the primitive type;

and rude copies of the Greek coins were made by the Keltic inhabitants of Gaul. In copying the foreign pieces, they retained their own symbolic cross.

The reverse of the coins of the Volcæ Tectosages, who inhabited the greater portion of Languedoc, was impressed with crosses, their angles filled with pellets, so like those on the silver coins of the Edwards, that, were it not for the quality of the metal, one would take these Gaulish coins to be the production of the Middle Ages. The Leuci, who inhabited the country round the modern Toul, had similar coins. One of their pieces has been figured by M. de Saulcy[1]. It represents a circle containing a cross, the angles between the arms occupied by a chevron. Some of the crosses have bezants, or pearls, forming a ring about them, or occupying the spaces between their limbs. Near Paris, at Choisy-le-Roy, was discovered a Gaulish coin representing a head, in barbarous imitation of that on a Greek medal, and the reverse occupied by a serpent coiled round the circumference, and enclosing two birds.

[1] Revue de Numismatique, 1836.

Between these birds is a cross, with pellets at the end of each limb, and a pellet in each angle.

A similar coin has been found in numbers near Arthenay, in Loiret, as well as others of analogous type. Other Gaulish coins bear the cross on both obverse and reverse. About two hundred pieces of this description were found in 1835, in the village of Cremiat-sur-Yen, near Quimper, in a brown earthen urn, with ashes and charcoal, in a rude kistvaen of stone blocks; proving that the cross was used on the coins in Armorica, at the time when incremation was practised. This cross with pellets, a characteristic of Gaulish coins, became in time the recognized reverse of early French pieces, and introduced itself into England with the Anglo-Norman kings.

We unfortunately know too little of the iconography of the Gauls, to be able to decide whether the cross was with them the symbol of a water deity; but I think it probable, and for this reason, that it is the sign of gods connected, more or less remotely, with water in other religions. That it was symbolic among the Irish and British Kelts is more than probable. The temple in the

tumulus of Newgrange is in the shape of a cross with rounded arms (Fig. 9). Curiously enough, the so-called Phœnician ruin of Giganteia, in Gozzo, resembles it in shape. The shamrock of Ireland derives its sacredness from its affecting the same form. In the mysticism of the Druids the stalk or long arm of the cross represented the way of life, and the three lobes of the clover-leaf, or the short arms of the cross, symbolized the three conditions of the spirit-world, Heaven, Purgatory, and Hell.

Let us turn to the Scandinavians. Their god Thorr was the thunder, and the hammer was his symbol. It was with this hammer that Thorr crushed the head of the great Mitgard serpent, that he destroyed the giants, that he restored the dead goats to life which drew his car, that he consecrated the pyre of Baldur. This hammer was a cross.

Just as the S. George's cross appears on the Gaulish coins, so does the cross pattée, or Thorr's hammer (Fig. 11), appear on the Scandinavian moneys.

In ploughing a field near Bornholm, in Fyen, in 1835, a discovery was made of several gold coins and ornaments belonging to ancient Danish

civilization. The collection consisted of personal ornaments, such as brooches, fibulæ, and torques, and also of pieces of money, to which were fastened rings in order that they might be strung on a necklace. Among these were two rude copies of coins of the successors of Constantine; but the others were of a class very common in the North. They were impressed with a four-footed horned beast, girthed, and mounted by a monstrous human head, intended, in barbarous fashion, to represent the rider. In front of the head was the sign of Thorr's hammer, a cross pattée. Four of the specimens bearing this symbol exhibited likewise the name of Thorr in runes. A still ruder coin, discovered with the others, was deficient in the cross, whose place was occupied by a four-point star[2].

Among the flint weapons discovered in Denmark are stone cruciform hammers, with a hole at the intersection of the arms for the insertion of the haft (Fig. 10). As the lateral limbs could have been of little or no use, it is probable that these cruciform hammers were those used in consecrating victims in Thorr's worship.

The cross of Thorr is still used in Iceland as a

[2] Transactions of the Society of Northern Antiquaries for 1836.

magical sign in connexion with storms of wind and rain.

King Olaf, Longfellow tells us, when keeping Christmas at Drontheim—

> " O'er his drinking-horn, the sign
> He made of the Cross Divine,
> As he drank, and mutter'd his prayers ;
> But the Berserks evermore
> Made the sign of the Hammer of Thorr
> Over theirs."

Actually they both made the same symbol.

This we are told by Snorro Sturleson, in the Heimskringla[3], when he describes the sacrifice at Lade, at which King Hakon, Athelstan's foster-son, was present: "Now, when the first full goblet was filled, Earl Sigurd spoke some words over it, and blessed it in Odin's name, and drank to the king out of the horn; and the king then took it, and made the sign of the cross over it. Then said Kaare of Greyting, 'What does the king mean by doing so? will he not sacrifice?' But Earl Sigurd replied, 'The king is doing what all of you do who trust in your power and strength; for he is blessing the full goblet in the name of Thorr, by making the sign of his hammer over it before he drinks it.'"

[3] Heimskringla, Saga iv., c. 18.

Bells were rung in the Middle Ages to drive away thunder. Among the German peasantry the sign of the cross is used to dispel a thunder-storm. The cross is used because it resembles Thorr's hammer, and Thorr is the Thunderer: for the same reason bells were often marked with the "fylfot," or cross of Thorr (Fig. 11), especially where the Norse settled, as in Lincolnshire and Yorkshire. Thorr's cross is on the bells of Appleby, and Scotherne, Waddingham, Bishop's Norton, and West Barkwith, in Lincolnshire, on those of Hathersage in Derbyshire, Mexborough in Yorkshire, and many more.

The fylfot is curiously enough the sacred Swaslika of the Buddhist; and the symbol of Buddha on the reverse of a coin found at Ugain is a cross of equal arms, with a circle at the extremity of each, and the fylfot in each circle.

The same peculiar figure occurs on coins of Syracuse, Corinth, and Chalcedon, and is frequently employed on Etruscan cinerary urns. It curiously enough appears on the dress of a fossor, as a sort of badge of his office, on one of the paintings in the Roman catacombs.

But, leaving the cross pattée, let us examine some other crosses.

Sozomen, the ecclesiastical historian, says that, on the destruction of the Serapium in Egypt, "there were found sculptured on the stones certain characters regarded as sacred, resembling the sign of the cross. This representation, interpreted by those who knew the meaning, signified 'The Life to come.' This was the occasion of a great number of pagans embracing Christianity, the more so because other characters announced that the temple would be destroyed when this character came to light[4]." Socrates gives further particulars: "Whilst they were demolishing and despoiling the temple of Serapis, they found characters, engraved on the stone, of the kind called hieroglyphics, the which characters had the figure of the cross. When the Christians and the Greeks [i. e. heathen] saw this, they referred the signs to their own religions. The Christians, who regarded the cross as the symbol of the salutary passion of Christ, thought that this character was their own. But the Greeks said it was common to Christ and Serapis; though this cruciform character is, in fact, one thing to the Christians, and another to the Greeks. A controversy having arisen,

[4] Sozomen, Hist. Eccles. vii., c. 14.

some of the Greeks [heathen] converted to Christianity, who understood the hieroglyphics, interpreted this cross-like figure to signify 'The Life to come.' The Christians, seizing on this as in favour of their religion, gathered boldness and assurance; and as it was shown by other sacred characters that the temple of Serapis was to have an end when was brought to light this cruciform character, signifying 'The Life to come,' a great number were converted and were baptized, confessing their sins[5]."

Rufinus, who tells the story also, says that this took place at the destruction of the Serapium at Canopus[6]; but Socrates and Sozomen probably followed Sophronius, who wrote a book on the destruction of the Serapium, and locate the event in Alexandria[7].

Rufinus says, "The Egyptians are said to have the sign of the Lord's cross among those letters which are called sacerdotal—of which letter or figure this, they say, is the interpretation: 'The Life to come.'"

[5] Socrat. Hist. Eccles. v., c. 17.

[6] Rufin. Hist. Eccles. ii., c. 29.

[7] "Sophronius, vir apprime eruditus, laudes Bethleem adhuc puer, et nuper de subversione Serapis insignem librum composuit."—Hieronym. Vit. Illust.

There is some slight difficulty as to fixing the date of the destruction of the Serapium. Marcellinus refers it to the year 389, but some chronologists have moved it to 391. It was certainly overthrown in the reign of Theodosius I.

There can be little doubt that the cross in the Serapium was the *Crux ansata* (Fig. 12), the S. Anthony's cross, or Tau with a handle. The antiquaries of last century supposed it to be a Nile key or a phallus, significations purely hypothetical and false, as were all those they attributed to Egyptian hieroglyphs. As Sir Gardner Wilkinson remarks, it is precisely the god Nilus who is least often represented with this symbol in his hand[8], and the Nile key is an ascertained figure of different shape. Now it is known for certain that the symbol is that of life. Among other indications, we have only to cite the Rosetta stone, on which it is employed to translate the title *αἰωνόβιος* given to Ptolemy Epiphanius.

The Christians of Egypt gladly accepted this witness to the cross, and reproduced it in their churches and elsewhere, making it precede, follow, or accompany their inscriptions. Thus, beside

[8] Manners and Customs of the Ancient Egyptians, iv., p. 341.

one of the Christian inscriptions at Phile is seen both a Maltese cross and a crux ansata. In a painting covering the end of a church in the cemetery of El-Khargeh, in the Great Oasis, are three handled crosses around the principal subject, which seems to have been a figure of a saint [9].

Not less manifest is the intention in an inscription in a Christian church to the east of the Nile in the desert. It is this :—

ΚΑΘΟ☥ΛΙΚΗ+ΕΚΚΛΗ☥CΙΑ.

Beside, or in the hand of, the Egyptian gods, this symbol is generally to be seen : it is held in the right hand, by the loop, and indicates the Eternity of Life which is the attribute of divinity. When Osiris is represented holding out the crux ansata to a mortal, it means that the person to whom he presents it has put off mortality, and entered on the life to come.

Several theories have been started to account for the shape. The Phallic theory is monstrous, and devoid of evidence. It has also been suggested that the Tau (T) represents a table or altar,

[9] Hoskins, Visit to the Great Oasis, Lond. 1837, plate xii.

and that the loop symbolizes a vase [1] or an egg [2] upon that altar.

These explanations are untenable when brought into contact with the monuments of Egypt. The ovoid form of the upper member is certainly a handle, and is so used (Fig. 13). No one knows, and probably no one ever will know, what originated the use of this sign, and gave it such significance.

The Greek cross is also found on Egyptian monuments, but less frequently than the cross of S. Anthony. A figure of a Shari (Fig. 14), from Sir Gardner Wilkinson's book, has a necklace round his throat, from which depends a pectoral cross. A similar ornament hangs on the breast of Tiglath Pileser, in the colossal tablet from Nimroud, now in the British Museum (Fig. 15). Another king from the ruins of Nineveh wears a Maltese cross on his bosom. And another, from the hall of Nisroch, carries an emblematic necklace, consisting of the sun surrounded by a ring, the moon, a Maltese

[1] "Hieroglyphica ejusdem (vocis) figura formam exhibet mensæ sacræ fulcro innixæ cui vas quoddam religionis indicium superpositum est."—P. Ungarelli, Interpretat. Obeliscorum Urbis, p. 5.

[2] Dognée, Les Symboles Antiques, L'Œuf. Bruxelles, 1865.

cross likewise in a ring, a three-horned cap, and a symbol like two horns [3].

A third Egyptian cross is that represented Fig. 16, which apparently is intended for a Latin cross rising out of a heart, like the mediæval emblem of "Cor in Cruce, Crux in Corde:" it is the hieroglyph of goodness [4].

The handled cross was certainly a sacred symbol among the Babylonians. It occurs repeatedly on their cylinders, bricks, and gems.

On a cylinder in the Paris Cabinet of Antiquities, published by Münter [5], are four figures, the first winged, the second armed with what seems to be thunderbolts. Beside him is the crux ansata, with a hawk sitting on the oval handle. The other figures are a woman and a child. This cross is half the height of the deity.

Another cylinder in the same Cabinet represents three personages. Between two with tiaras is the same symbol. A third in the same collection bears the same three principal figures as the first. The winged deity holds a spear; the central god

[3] Bonomi, Nineveh and its Palaces, pp. 303, 333, 414.

[4] H. W. Westrop, in Gentleman's Magazine, N. S., vol. xv., p. 80.

[5] Münter, Religion d. Babylonier, Taf. i.

is armed with a bundle of thunderbolts and a dart, and is accompanied by the cross; the third, a female, bears a flower. On another and still more curious cylinder is a monarch or god, behind whom stands a servant holding up the symbol (Fig. 17). The god is between two handled crosses, and behind the servant is a Maltese cross. Some way above is a bird with expanded wings. Again, on another the winged figure is accompanied by the cross. A remarkable specimen, from which I have copied the principal figure (Fig. 18), represents a god holding the sacred sign by the long arm, whilst a priest offers him a gazelle.

An oval seal, of white chalcedony, engraved in the Mémoires de l'Académie royale des Inscriptions et Belles Lettres (vol. xvi.), has as subject a standing figure between two stars, beneath which are handled crosses. Above the head of the deity is the triangle, or symbol of the Trinity.

This seal is of uncertain origin: it is supposed not to be Babylonish, but Phœnician. The Phœnicians also regarded the cross as a sacred sign. The goddess Astarte, the moon, the presiding divinity over the watery element, is represented on the coins of Byblos holding a long staff surmounted by a cross, and resting her foot on the prow of a

galley, and not unlike the familiar figures of Faith on the Christian Knowledge Society books.

The cyclopean temple at Gozzo, the island adjacent to Malta, has been supposed to be a shrine of the Phœnicians to Mylitta or Astarte. It is of a cruciform shape (Fig. 9). A superb medal of Cilicia, bearing a Phœnician legend, and struck under the Persian domination, has on one side a figure of this goddess with a crux ansata by her side, the lower member split.

Another form of the cross (Figs. 19, 20) is repeated frequently and prominently on coins of Asia Minor. It occurs as the reverse of a silver coin supposed to be of Cyprus, on several Cilician coins: it is placed beneath the throne of Baal of Tarsus, on a Phœn cian coin of that town, bearing the legend בעל תרז (Baal Tharz). A medal, possibly of the same place, with partially obliterated Phœnician characters, has the cross occupying the entire field of the reverse side. Several, with inscriptions in unknown characters, have a ram on one side, and the cross and ring on the other. Another has the sacred bull accompanied by this symbol; others have a lion's head on obverse, and the cross and circle on the reverse.

A beautiful Sicilian medal of Camarina bears a

swan and altar, and beneath the altar is one of these crosses with a ring attached to it[6].

As in Phœnician iconography this cross generally accompanies a deity, in the same manner as the handled cross is associated with the Persepolitan, Babylonish, and Egyptian gods, we may conclude that it had with the Phœnicians the same signification of life eternal. That it also symbolized regeneration through water, I also believe. On Babylonish cylinders it is generally employed in conjunction with the hawk or eagle, either seated on it, or flying above it. This eagle is Nisroch, whose eyes are always flowing with tears for the death of Tammūz. Nesr, or Nisroch, is certainly the rain-cloud. In Greek iconography Zeus, the heaven, is accompanied by the eagle to symbolize the cloud. On several Phœnician or uncertain coins of Asia Minor the eagle and the cross go together. Therefore I think that the cross may symbolize life restored by rain.

An inscription in Thessaly, **ΕΡΜΑΩ ΧΘΟΝΙΟΥ**, is accompanied by a Calvary cross (Fig. 21); and Greek crosses of equal arms adorn the tomb of

[6] These medals are engraved to accompany the article of M. Raoul-Rochette on the Croix ansée, in the Mém. de l'Académie des Inscr. et Belles Lettres, tom. xvi.

Midas, in Phrygia. Crosses of different shapes, chiefly like Figs. 2 and 11, are common on ancient cinerary urns in Italy. These two forms occur on sepulchral vessels found under a bed of volcanic tufa on the Alban mount, and of remote antiquity.

It is curious that the T should have been used on the roll of the Roman soldiery as the sign of life, whilst the Θ designated death[7].

But, long before the Romans, long before the Etruscans, there lived in the plains of Northern Italy a people to whom the cross was a religious symbol, the sign beneath which they laid their dead to rest; a people of whom history tells nothing, knowing not their name; but of whom antiquarian research has learned this, that they lived in ignorance of the arts of civilization, that they dwelt in villages built on platforms over lakes, and that they trusted in the cross to guard, and may be to revive, their loved ones whom they committed to the dust. Throughout Emilia are found remains of these people; these remains form quarries whence manure is dug by the peasants of the present day. These quarries

[7] Isidor. Origin. i., c. 23. "T nota in capite versiculi supposita superstitem designat." Persius, Sat. iv. 13. Rufin. in Hieronym. ap. Casaubon ad Pers.

go by the name of *terramares.* They are vast accumulations of cinders, charcoal, bones, fragments of pottery, and other remains of human industry. As this earth is very rich in phosphates, it is much appreciated by the agriculturists as a dressing for their land. In these terramares there are no human bones. The fragments of earthenware belong to articles of domestic use; with them are found querns, moulds for metal, portions of cabin floors and walls, and great quantities of kitchen refuse. They are deposits analogous to those which have been discovered in Denmark and in Switzerland. The metal discovered in the majority of these terramares is bronze. The remains belong to three distinct ages. In the first none of the fictile ware was turned on the wheel or fire-baked. Sometimes these deposits exhibit an advance of civilization. Iron came into use, and with it the potter's wheel was discovered, and the earthenware was put in the furnace.

When in the same quarry these two epochs are found, the remains of the second age are always superposed over those of the bronze age.

A third period is occasionally met with, but only occasionally. A period when a rude art introduced itself, and representations of animals or human

beings adorned the pottery. Among the remains of this period is found the first trace of money, the æs rude, little bronze fragments without shape.

According to the calculations of M. Des Vergers, the great development of Etruscan civilization took place about 290 years before the foundation of Rome, more than 1040 years before our era. The age of the terramares must be long antecedent to the time of Etruscan civilization. The remote antiquity of these remains may be gathered from the amount of accumulation over them. A section of the deposit in Parma, where was one of these lacustrine villages is as follows:—

	ft.	in.
Roman and later remains . . . . . a depth of	4	1
Midden of ancient inhabitants, three deposits separated by thin layers of red earth or ashes	6	8
Latest bed of lake containing piles	7	0
Secondary bed containing piles	3	3
Original bed of lake containing piles	21	0

Twice had the accumulation risen so as to necessitate the re-driving of piles, and over the last, the deposits had reached the height of 6 feet 8 inches. Since the age when these people vanished, earth has accumulated to the depth of 4 feet.

At Castione, not far from the station of Borgo S. Donino, on the line between Parma and Placenza,

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is a convent built on a mound. Where that mound rises there was originally a lake, and the foundations of the building are laid in the ruins of an ancient population which filled the lake, and converted it into a hill of refuse.

From the broken bones in the middens, we learn that the roebuck, the stag, the wild boar, then ranged the forests, that cattle, pigs, sheep, goats, and dogs were domesticated; that these people had two kinds of horses, one a powerful animal, the other small-boned, and that horseflesh was eaten by the inhabitants of the terramares.

Wheat, barley, millet, and beans have been found about the piles, together with the stones of wild plums, sloes, and cherries, also crab-apple pips.

A bronze dagger was found at Castione, a spear-head of the same metal in the deposit of Bargone di Salso. A hatchet came from the terramare of Noceto; quantities of little wheels, of unknown use, have been discovered, also hair-pins and combs. One, for a lady's back-hair, ornamented, and of stag's horn, came from the terramare of Fodico di Poviglio. The pottery found is mostly in fragments. Sometimes the bottoms of the vessels were rudely engraved with crosses (Figs. 22, 23, 24).

At Villanova, in the Commune of S. Maria delle

Caselle, near Bologna, has been discovered a cemetery of this ancient people. The graves cover a space measuring about 73 yards by 36 yards. One hundred and thirty-three tombs have been examined. They were constructed of great boulders, rectangular, somewhat cylindrical, and slightly conical. Earth had accumulated over them, and they were buried. They were about four feet deep. The cist was floored with slabs of freestone, the sides were built up of boulders; other cists were constructed of slabs, and cubical in shape. A hundred and seventy-nine of the bodies had been burnt. Each tomb contained a cinerary urn containing the calcined human remains. The urns were of a peculiar shape, and appeared to have been made for the purpose. They resembled a dice-box, and consisted of a couple of inverted cones with a partition at their bases, where they were united. Half-melted remains of ornaments were found with some of the human ashes. In one vessel was a charred fragment of a horse's rib. Therefore it is likely that the favourite horse was sacrificed and consumed with his master.

The mouth of the urn which contained the ashes of the deceased was closed with a little vessel or saucer. Near the remains of the dead were found curious solid double cones with rounded ends; these

ends were elaborately engraved with crosses (Figs. 23. 25. 27). In the ossuaries made of double cones, around the diaphragm ran a line of circles containing crosses (Fig. 26).

Another cemetery of the same people exists at Golasecca, on the plateau of Somma, at the extremity of the Lago Maggiore. A vast number of sepulchres have there been opened. They belong to the same period as those of Villanova, the age of lacustrine habitations.

"That which characterizes the sepulchres of Golasecca, and gives them their highest interest," says M. de Mortillet, who investigated them, "is this,—first, the entire absence of all organic representations; we only found three, and they were exceptional, in tombs not belonging to the plateau;—secondly, the almost invariable presence of the cross under the vases in the tombs. When one reverses the ossuaries, the saucer-lids, or the accessory vases, one saw almost always, if in good preservation, a cross traced thereon. . . . The examination of the tombs of Golasecca proves in a most convincing, positive, and precise manner, that which the terramares of Emilia had only indicated, but which had been confirmed by the cemetery of Villanova; that above a thousand years before

Christ, the cross was already a religious emblem of frequent employment[8]."

It may be objected to this, that the cross is a sign so easily made, that it was naturally the first attempted by a rude people. There are, however, so many varieties of crosses among the urns of Golasecca, and ingenuity seems to have been so largely exercised in diversifying this one sign, without recurring to others, that I cannot but believe the sign itself had a religious signification.

On the other side of the Alps, at the same period, lived a people in a similar state of civilization, whose palustrine habitations and remains have been carefully explored. Among the Swiss potteries, however, the cross is very rarely found.

In the depths of the forests of Central America, is a ruined city. It was not inhabited at the time of the conquest of Mexico by the Spaniards. They discovered the temples and palaces of Chiapa, but of Palenque they knew nothing. According to tradition it was founded by Votan

[8] De Mortillet, Le signe dè la Croix avant le Christianisme. Paris, 1866. The title of this book is deceptive. The subject is the excavations of pre-historic remains in Northern Italy, and pre-Christian crosses are only casually and cursorily dealt with.

in the ninth century before the Christian era. The principal building in Palenque is the palace, 228 feet long, by 180 feet, and 40 feet high. The Eastern façade has fourteen doors opening on a terrace, with bas-reliefs between them. A noble tower rises above the courtyard in the centre. In this building are several small temples or chapels, with altars standing. At the back of one of these altars is a slab of gypsum, on which are sculptured two figures standing, one on each side of a cross (Fig. 28), to which one is extending his hands with an offering of a baby or a monkey. The cross is surrounded with rich feather-work, and ornamental chains [9].

The style of sculpture, and the accompanying hieroglyphic inscriptions leave no room for doubting it to be a heathen representation. Above the cross is a bird of peculiar character, perched, as we saw the eagle Nisroch on a cross upon a Babylonish cylinder. The same cross is represented on old pre-Mexican MSS., as in the Dresden Codex, and that in the possession of Herr Fejérváry, at the end of which is a colossal cross, in the midst of which is represented a bleeding deity, and figures

[9] Stephens, Central America. London, 1842. Vol. ii. p. 346.

stand round a Tau cross, upon which is perched the sacred bird [1].

The cross was also used in the north of Mexico. It occurs amongst the Mixtecas and in Queredaro. Siguenza speaks of an Indian cross which was found in the cave of Mixteca Baja. Among the ruins on the island of Zaputero in Lake Nicaragua were also found old crosses reverenced by the Indians. White marble crosses were found on the island of S. Ulloa, on its discovery. In the state of Oaxaca, the Spaniards found that wooden crosses were erected as sacred symbols, so also in Aguatolco, and among the Zapatecas. The cross was venerated as far as Florida on one side, and Cibola on the other. In South America, the same sign was considered symbolical and sacred. It was revered in Paraguay. In Peru the Incas honoured a cross made out of a single piece of jasper, it was an emblem belonging to a former civilization.

Among the Muyscas at Cumana the cross was regarded with devotion, and was believed to be endued with power to drive away evil spirits ; consequently new-born children were placed under the sign [2].

[1] Klemm, Kulturgeschichte, v. 142, 143.

[2] See list of authorities in Müller, Geschichte der Amerikanischen Urreligionen. Basel, 1855, pp. 371. 421. 498, 499.

Probably all these crosses, certainly those of Central America, were symbols of the Rain-god. This we are told by the conquerors, of the crosses on the island of Cozumel. The cross was not an original symbol of the Azteks and Tolteks, but of the Maya race, who inhabited Mexico, Guatemala, and Yucatan. The Mayas were subdivided into the tribes of Totonacs, Othomi, Huasteks, Tzendales, &c., and were conquered by a Nahual race from the North, called Azteks and Tolteks, who founded the great Mexican empire with which Cortez and his Spaniards were brought in collision[3]. This Maya stock was said to have been highly civilized, and the conquered to have influenced their conquerors.

The Maya race invaded Central America, coming from the Antilles, when the country was peopled by the Quinamies, to whom the Cyclopean erections still extant are attributed. They were overthrown by Votan, B.C. 800. The cross was adopted by the Azteks, from the conquered Mayas. It was the emblem of Quiateot, the god of Rain. In order to obtain rain

[3] It is exceedingly difficult to classify these races, and arrive at any exact conclusions with regard to their history. The Tzendales were probably never conquered.

little boys and girls were sacrificed to him, and their flesh was devoured at a sacred banquet by the chiefs. Among the Mexicans, the showery month Quiahuitl received its name from him. In Cibola, water as the generator was honoured under this symbol; in Cozumel, the sacred cross in the temples was of wood or stone, ten palms high, and to it were offered incense and quails. To obtain showers, the people bore it in procession.

The Tolteks said that their national deity Quetzalcoatl had introduced the sign and ritual of the cross, and it was their God of Rain and Health, and was called the Tree of Nutriment, or Tree of Life. On this account also was the mantle of the Toltek atmospheric god covered with red crosses.

The cross was again a symbol of mysterious significance in Brahminical iconography. In the Cave of Elephanta, in India, over the head of a figure engaged in massacring infants, is to be seen the cross. It is placed by Müller, in his "Glauben, Wissen, und Kunst der alten Hindus," in the hands of Seva, Brahma, Vishnu, Tvashtri (Fig. 29). This cross has a wheel in the centre, and is called Kiakra or Tschakra. When held by Vishnu, the world-sustaining principle, it signifies his power to penetrate heaven and earth, and bring to naught the powers of evil. It symbolizes the eternal govern-

ance of the world, and to it the worshipper of Vishnu attributes as many virtues as does the devout Catholic to the Christian cross. Fra Paolino tells us it was used by the ancient kings of India as a sceptre.

In a curious Indian painting reproduced by Müller (Tab. I., fig. 2), Brahma is represented crowned with clouds, with lilies for eyes, with four hands—one holding the necklace of creation; another the Veda; a third, the chalice of the source of life; the fourth, the fiery cross. Another painting (Tab. I., fig. 78) represents Krishna in the centre of the world as its sustaining principle, with six arms, three of which hold the cross, one a sceptre of dominion, another a flute, a third a sword. Another (Tab. II., fig. 61) gives Jama, the judge of the nether world, with spear, sword, scales, torch, and cross. Tab. II., fig. 140, gives Brawani, the female earth principle, holding a lily, a flame, a sword, and a cross. The list of representations might be greatly extended.

It was only natural that the early and mediæval Christians, finding the cross a symbol of life among the nations of antiquity, should look curiously into the Old Testament, to see whether there were not foreshadowings in it of "the wood whereby righteousness cometh."

They found it in the blood struck on the lintel and the door-posts of the houses of the Israelites in Egypt. They supposed the rod of Moses to have been headed with the Egyptian Crux ansata, in which case its employment in producing the storm of rain and hail, in dividing the Red Sea, in bringing streams of water from the rock, testify to its symbolic character with reference to water. They saw it in Moses with arms expanded on the Mount, in the pole with transverse bar upon which was wreathed the brazen serpent, and in the two sticks gathered by the Widow of Sarepta. But especially was it seen in the passage of Ezekiel (ix. 4. 6), "The Lord said unto him, Go through the midst of the city, through the midst of Jerusalem, and set a mark upon the foreheads of the men that sigh and that cry for all the abominations that be done in the midst thereof. Slay utterly old and young, both maids, and little children, and women: but come not near any man upon whom is the mark; and begin at My sanctuary." In the Vulgate, it stands: "Et signa Thau super frontes vivorum gementium." There is some doubt as to whether the sign Thau should be inserted or not. The Septuagint does not give it. It simply says δὸς σημεῖον. S. Jerome testifies that the versions of

Aquila and Symmachus, written, the one under Adrian, the other under Marcus Aurelius, were without it, and that it was only in the version of Theodotion, made under Septimius Severus, that the T was inserted. Nevertheless S. Jerome adopted it in his translation.

On the other hand Tertullian saw the cross in this passage[4]. The Thau was the old Hebrew character, which the Samaritan resembled, and which was shaped like a cross. S. Jerome probably did not adopt his rendering without foundation, for he was well skilled in Hebrew, and he refers again and again to this passage of Ezekiel[5]. The Epistle of S. Barnabas seems to allude to it[6]; so do S. Cyprian, S. Augustine, Origen, and S. Isidore[7]. Bishop Lowth was disposed to accept the Thau, so was Dr. Münter, the Protestant bishop of Zeeland. But, indeed, there need be little doubt as to the passage. The

[4] Adv. Marcion. iii. 22: "Est enim littera, Græcorum Thau, nostra autem T, species crucis quam portendebant futuram in frontibus nostris apud veram et catholicam Hierusalem."

[5] In Ezech. ix. 4. Epistol. ad Fabiol. In Isaia c. lxvi.

[6] Epist. ch. ix.: Σταυρὸς ἐν τῷ Τ ἔμελλεν ἔχειν τὴν χάριν.

[7] Cypr. Testimon. adv. Jud. ii. c. 27. August. de Alterc. Synag. et Eccles.

word for *sign* used by the prophet is תָּו *Tau*, meaning, as Gesenius says in his Lexicon, *signum cruciforme;* and he adds, "The Hebrews on their coins adopted the most ancient cruciform sign +."

The Mediævals went further still, they desired to see the cross still stronger characterized in the history of the Jewish Church, and as the records of the Old Covenant were deficient on that point, they supplemented them with fable.

That fable is the romance or Legend of the Cross, a legend of immense popularity in the Middle Ages, if we may judge by the numerous representations of its leading incidents, which meet us in stained glass and fresco.

In the churches of Troyes alone, it appears on the windows of S. Martin-ès-Vignes, of S. Pantaléon, S. Madeleine, and S. Nizier[8].

It is frescoed along the walls of the choir of the church of S. Croce at Florence, by the hand of Agnolo Gaddi. Pietro della Francesca also dedicated his pencil to the history of the Cross in a series of frescoes in the Chapel of the Bacci, in the church of S. Francesco at Arezzo. It occurs as a predella painting among the specimens of early art

[8] Curiosités de la Champagne. Paris, 1860.

in the Academia delle Belle Arti at Venice, and is the subject of a picture by Beham in the Munich Gallery[9]. The legend is told in full in the Vita Christi, printed at Troyes in 1517, in the Legenda Aurea of Jacques de Voragine, in an old Dutch work, "Gerschiedenis van det heylighe Cruys," in a French MS. of the thirteenth century in the British Museum. Gervase of Tilbury relates a portion of it in his Otia Imperalia[1], quoting from Comestor; it appears also in the Speculum Historiale, in Gottfried von Viterbo, in the Chronicon Engelhusii, and elsewhere.

Gottfried introduces a Hiontus in the place of Seth in the following story; Hiontus is corrupted from Ionicus or Ionithus.

The story is as follows:—

When our first father was banished Paradise, he lived in penitence, striving to recompense for the past by prayer and toil. When he reached a great age and felt death approach, he summoned Seth to his side, and said, "Go, my son, to the terrestrial Paradise, and ask the Archangel who keeps the gate to give me a balsam which will

[9] Lady Eastlake's History of our Lord. Lond. 1865, ii. p. 390.

[1] Tertia Decisio, c. liv.; ed. Liebrecht, p. 25.

save me from death. You will easily find the way, because my footprints scorched the soil as I left Paradise. Follow my blackened traces, and they will conduct you to the gate whence I was expelled." Seth hastened to Paradise. The way was barren, vegetation was scanty and of sombre colours; over all lay the black prints of his father's and mother's feet. Presently the walls surrounding Paradise appeared. Around them nature revived, the earth was covered with verdure and dappled with flowers. The air vibrated with exquisite music. Seth was dazzled with the beauty which surrounded him, and he walked on forgetful of his mission. Suddenly there flashed before him a wavering line of fire, upright, like a serpent of light continuously quivering. It was the flaming sword in the hand of the Cherub who guarded the gate. As Seth drew nigh, he saw that the angel's wings were expanded so as to block the door. He prostrated himself before the Cherub, unable to utter a word. But the celestial being read in his soul, better than a mortal can read a book, the words which were there impressed, and he said, "The time of pardon is not yet come. Four thousand years must roll away ere the Redeemer shall open the gate to Adam, closed by his disobedience.

But as a token of future pardon, the wood whereon redemption shall be won shall grow from the tomb of thy father. Behold what he lost by his transgression!"

At these words the angel swung open the great portal of gold and fire, and Seth looked in.

He beheld a fountain, clear as crystal, sparkling like silver dust, playing in the midst of the garden, and gushing forth in four living streams. Before this mystic fountain grew a mighty tree, with a trunk of vast bulk, and thickly branched, but destitute of bark and foliage. Around the bole was wreathed a frightful serpent or caterpillar, which had scorched the bark and devoured the leaves. Beneath the tree was a precipice. Seth beheld the roots of the tree in Hell. There Cain was endeavouring to grasp the roots, and clamber up them into Paradise; but they laced themselves around the body and limbs of the fratricide, as the threads of a spider's web entangle a fly, and the fibres of the tree penetrated the body of Cain as though they were endued with life.

Horror-struck at this appalling spectacle, Seth raised his eyes to the summit of the tree. Now all was changed. The tree had grown till its branches reached heaven. The boughs were co-

vered with leaves, flowers, and fruit. But the fairest fruit was a little babe, a living sun, who seemed to be listening to the songs of seven white doves who circled round his head. A woman, more lovely than the moon, bore the child in her arms.

Then the Cherub shut the door, and said, "I give thee now three seeds taken from that tree. When Adam is dead, place these three seeds in thy father's mouth, and bury him."

So Seth took the seeds and returned to his father. Adam was glad to hear what his son told him, and he praised God. On the third day after the return of Seth he died. Then his son buried him in the skins of beasts which God had given him for a covering, and his sepulchre was on Golgotha. In course of time three trees grew from the seeds brought from Paradise: one was a cedar, another a cypress, and the third a pine. They grew with prodigious force, thrusting their boughs to right and left. It was with one of these boughs that Moses performed his miracles in Egypt, brought water out of the rock, and healed those whom the serpents slew in the desert.

After a while the three trees touched one another, then began to incorporate and confound their

several natures in a single trunk. It was beneath this tree that David sat when he bewailed his sins.

In the time of Solomon, this was the noblest of the trees of Lebanon; it surpassed all in the forests of King Hiram, as a monarch surpasses those who crouch at his feet. Now, when the son of David erected his palace, he cut down this tree to convert it into the main pillar supporting his roof. But all in vain. The column refused to answer the purpose: it was at one time too long, at another too short. Surprised at this resistance, Solomon lowered the walls of his palace, to suit the beam, but at once it shot up and pierced the roof, like an arrow driven through a piece of canvas, or a bird recovering its liberty. Solomon, enraged, cast the tree over Cedron, that all might trample on it as they crossed the brook.

There the Queen of Sheba found it, and she, recognizing its virtue, had it raised. Solomon then buried it. Some while after, the king dug the pool of Bethesda on the spot. This pond at once acquired miraculous properties, and healed the sick who flocked to it. The water owed its virtues to the beam which lay beneath it.

When the time of the Crucifixion of Christ drew

nigh, this wood rose to the surface, and was brought out of the water. The executioners, when seeking a suitable beam to serve for the cross, found it, and of it made the instrument of the death of the Saviour. After the Crucifixion it was buried on Calvary, but it was found by the Empress Helena, mother of Constantine the Great, deep in the ground with two others, May 3, 328; Christ's was distinguished from those of the thieves by a sick woman being cured by touching it. It was carried away by Chosroes, king of Persia, on the plundering of Jerusalem; but was recovered by Heraclius, who defeated him in battle, Sept. 14, 615; a day that has ever since been commemorated as the Feast of the Exaltation of the Cross.

Such is the Legend of the Cross, one of the wildest of mediæval fancies. It is founded, though unconsciously, on this truth, that the Cross was a sacred sign long before Christ died upon it.

And how account for this?

For my own part, I see no difficulty in believing that it formed a portion of the primæval religion, traces of which exist over the whole world, among every people; that trust in the Cross was a part of the ancient faith which taught men to believe in a Trinity, in a War in Heaven, a Paradise from which

man fell, a Flood, and a Babel ; a faith which was deeply impressed with a conviction that a Virgin should conceive and bear a son, that the Dragon's head should be bruised, and that through Shedding of blood should come Remission. The use of the cross, as a symbol of life and regeneration through water, is as widely spread over the world as the belief in the ark of Noah. May be, the shadow of the Cross was cast further back into the night of ages, and fell on a wider range of country, than we are aware of.

It is more than a coincidence that Osiris by the cross should give life eternal to the Spirits of the Just ; that with the cross Thorr should smite the head of the Great Serpent, and bring to life those who were slain ; that beneath the cross the Muysca mothers should lay their babes, trusting by that sign to secure them from the power of evil spirits ; that with that symbol to protect them, the ancient people of Northern Italy should lay them down in the dust[2].

[2] Appendix A.

Schamir

IT will be remembered that, on the giving of the law from Sinai, Moses was bidden erect to God an altar: "Thou shalt not build it of hewn stone, for if thou lift up thy tool upon it, thou hast polluted it" (Exod. xx. 25). And later: "There shalt thou build an altar unto the Lord thy God, an altar of stones: thou shalt not lift up any iron tool upon them" (Deut. xxvii. 6). Such an altar was raised by Joshua after the passage of Jordan: "An altar of whole stones, over which no man hath lift up any iron" (Joshua viii. 31).

When King Solomon erected his glorious temple, "the house, when it was in building, was built of stone made ready before it was brought thither: so that there was neither hammer, nor axe, nor any tool of iron, heard in the house while it was in building" (1 Kings vi. 7). And the reason of the prohibition

of iron in the construction of the altar is given in the Mischna—iron is used to shorten life, the altar to prolong it (Middoth 3, 4). Iron is the metal used in war; with it, says Pliny, we do the best and worst acts: we plough fields, we build houses, we cleave rocks; but with it, also, come strife, and bloodshed, and rapine. The altar was the symbol of peace made between God and man, and therefore the metal employed in war was forbidden to be used in its erection. The idea was extended by Solomon to the whole temple. It is not said that iron was not used in the preparation of the building stones, but that no tool was heard in the fitting together of the parts.

That temple symbolized the Church triumphant in heaven when the stones, hewn afar off in the quarries of this world, are laid noiselessly in their proper place, so that the whole, "fitly framed together, groweth unto a holy temple in the Lord;" an idea well expressed in the ancient hymn "Angulare fundamentum:"—

> "Many a blow and biting sculpture
> Polish'd well those stones elect,
> In their places well compacted
> By the heavenly Architect."

Nothing in the sacred narrative implies any

miraculous act having been accomplished in this erecting a temple of stones hewn at a distance; and in the account of the building of the temple in the Book of Chronicles no reference is made to the circumstance, which would have been the case had any marvel attended it.

The Septuagint renders the passage, *ὁ οἶκος λίθοις ἀκροτόμοις ἀργοῖς ᾠκοδομήθη.* The word *ἀκρότομος* is used by the LXX in three places, for חַלָּמִישׁ, which is rough, hard, unhewn stone. Where it says in Deuteronomy (viii. 15), "Who brought thee forth water out of the rock of flint," the LXX use *ἀκρότομος.* Where the Psalmist says, "Who turned the flint-stone into a springing well" (Ps. cxiv. 8), and Job, "He putteth His hand upon the rock" (xxviii. 9), they employ *ἀκρότομος.* So, too, in the Book of Wisdom (xi. 4), "Water was given them out of the flinty rock," *ἐκ πέτρας ἀκροτόμου,* which is paralleled by "the hard stone," *λίθος σκληρός.* And in Ecclesiasticus, Ezekias is said to have "digged the hard rock with iron," *ὤρυξε σιδήρῳ ἀκρότομον* (xlviii. 17).

Λίθος ἀκρότομος is, therefore, not a hewn stone, but one with natural angles, unhewn. Thus Suidas uses the expression, *σκληρὰ καὶ ἄτμητος,* and Theodotion calls the sharp stone used by Zipporah in

circumcising her son, *ἀκρότομος*. The *ἀργοῖς* of the LXX signifies also the rough natural condition of the stones. Thus Pausanias speaks of gold and silver in unfused, rough lumps as *ἄργυρος καὶ χρυσὸς ἀργός*. Apparently, then, the LXX, in saying that the temple was erected of *ἀκροτόμοις ἀργοῖς*, express their meaning that the stones were unhewn and in their natural condition, so that the skill of Solomon was exhibited in putting together stones which had never been subjected to the tool. This is also the opinion of Josephus, who says, "The whole edifice of the temple is, with great art, compacted of rough stones, *ἐκ λίθων ἀκροτόμων*, which have been fitted into one another quite harmoniously, without the work of hammer or any other builder's tool being observable, but the whole fits together without the use of these, and the fitting seems to be rather one of free will than of force through mechanical means." And therein lay the skill of the king, for the unshapen blocks were pieced together as though they had been carefully wrought to their positions. And Procopius says that the temple was erected of unhewn stones, as it was forbidden of God to lift iron upon them, but that, nevertheless, they all fitted into one another. We see in these passages tokens of the marvellous having been supposed to

attach to a work which was free from any miraculous interposition. But at this point fable did not stop. Upon the carrying away of the Jews to Babylon, they were brought into contact with a flood of Iranian as well as Chaldæan myths, and adopted them without hesitation.

Around Solomon accumulated the fables which were related of Dschemschid and other Persian heroes, and were adopted by the Jews as legends of native production. It was not sufficient that Solomon should have skilfully pieced together the rough stones: he was supposed to have hewn them by supernatural means, without the tool of iron.

As Solomon, thus ran the tale, was about to build the temple without the use of iron, his wise men drew his attention to the stones of the high priest's breastplate, which had been cut and polished by something harder than themselves. This was schamir, which was able to cut where iron would not bite. Thereupon Solomon summoned the spirits to inform him of the whereabouts of this substance. They told him schamir was a worm of the size of a barley corn, but so powerful that the hardest flint could not resist him. The spirits advised Solomon to seek Asmodeus, king of the

devils, who could give him further information. When Solomon inquired where Asmodeus was to be met with, they replied that, on a distant mountain, he had dug a huge cistern, out of which he daily drank. Solomon then sent Benaiah with a chain, on which was written the magic word "schem hammphorasch," a fleece of wool and a skin of wine. Benaiah, having arrived at the cistern of Asmodeus, undermined it, and let the water off by a little hole, which he then plugged up with the wool; after which he filled the pit with wine. The evil spirit came, as was his wont, to the cistern, and scented the wine. Suspecting treachery, he refused to drink, and retired; but at length, impelled by thirst, he drank, and, becoming intoxicated, was chained by Benaiah and carried away. Benaiah had no willing prisoner to conduct: Asmodeus plunged and kicked, upsetting trees and houses. In this manner he came near a hut in which lived a widow, and when she besought him not to injure her poor little cot, he turned aside, and, in so doing, broke his leg. "Rightly," said the devil, "is it written: 'a soft tongue breaketh the bone!'" (Prov. xxv. 15). And a *diable boiteux* he has ever remained. When in the presence of Solomon,

Asmodeus was constrained to behave with greater decorum. Schamir, he told Solomon, was the property of the Prince of the Sea, and that prince entrusted none with the mysterious worm except the moor-hen, which had taken an oath of fidelity to him. The moor-hen takes the schamir with her to the tops of the mountains, splits them, and injects seeds, which grow and cover the naked rocks. Wherefore the bird is called Naggar Tura, the mountain-carver. If Solomon desired to possess himself of the worm, he must find the nest of the moor-hen, and cover it with a plate of glass, so that the mother bird could not get at her young without breaking the glass. She would seek schamir for the purpose, and the worm must be obtained from her.

Accordingly, Benaiah, son of Jehoiada, sought the nest of the bird, and laid over it a piece of glass. When the moor-hen came, and could not reach her young, she flew away and fetched schamir, and placed it on the glass. Then Benaiah shouted, and so terrified the bird, that she dropped the worm and flew away. Benaiah by this means obtained possession of the coveted schamir, and bore it to Solomon. But the moor-hen was so distressed at having broken her oath to the Prince

of the Sea that she slew herself[1]. According to another version, Solomon went to his fountain, where he found the dæmon Sackar, whom he captured by a ruse, and chained down. Solomon pressed his ring to the chains, and Sackar uttered a cry so shrill that the earth quaked.

Quoth Solomon, "Fear not; I shall restore you to liberty if you will tell me how to burrow noiselessly after minerals and metals."

"I know not how to do so," answered the Jin; "but the raven can tell you: place over her eggs a sheet of crystal, and you shall see how the mother will break it."

Solomon did so, and the mother brought a stone and shattered the crystal. "Whence got you that stone?" asked Solomon.

"It is the stone Samur," answered the raven; "it comes from a desert in the uttermost east." So the monarch sent some giants to follow the raven, and bring him a suitable number of stones[2]."

According to a third version, the bird is an eagle, and schamir is the Stone of Wisdom.

[1] Gittin, lxviii. Eisenmeyer: Neu-entdecktes Judenthum. Königsberg, 1711, i. p. 351.

[2] Collin de Plancy: Légendes de l'Ancien Test. Paris, 1861, p. 280.

Possessed of this schamir, Solomon wrought the stones for his temple.

Rabbinical fantasy has developed other myths concerning this mysterious force, resident in worm or stone. On the second day of Creation were created the well by which Jacob met Rebecca, the manna which fed the Israelites, the wonder-working rod of Moses, the ass which spake to Balaam, and schamir, the means whereby without iron tool Solomon was to build the House of God. Schamir is not in early rabbinical fable a worm; the treatise Sota gives the first indication of its being regarded as something more than a stone, by terming it a "creature," בריתא. "Our Rabbis have taught us that schamir is a creature as big as a barley-corn, created in the hexameron, and that nothing can resist it. How is it preserved? It is wrapped in a wisp of wool, and kept in a leaden box full of small grains like barley-meal[3]." After the building of the temple schamir vanished.

The story passed to the Greeks. Ælian relates of the ἔποψ or hoopoe, that a bird had once a nest in an old wall, in which there was a rent. The proprietor plastered over this crack. The hoopoe find-

[3] Sota, xlviii. 8.

ing that she could not get to her young, flew away in quest of a plant *πόα*, which she brought, and applied to the plaster, which at once gave way, and admitted her to her young. Then she went forth to seek food, and the man again stopped up the hole, but once more the hoopoe removed the obstacle by the same means. And this took place a third time again[4]. What Ælian relates of the hoopoe, Pliny tells of the woodpecker. This bird, he says, brings up its young in holes; and if the entrance to them be plugged up never so tight, the bird is able to make the plug burst out.

In the English Gesta Romanorum is the following story. There lived in Rome a noble emperor, Diocletian by name, who loved the virtue of compassion above every thing. Therefore he desired to know which of all the birds was most kindly affectioned towards its young. One day, the Emperor was wandering in the forest, when he lit upon the nest of a great bird called ostrich, in which was the mother with her young. The king took the nest along with the poults to his palace, and put it into a glass vessel. This the mother-bird saw, and, unable to reach her little ones, she

[4] Ælian, Hist. Animal. iii. 26.

returned into the wood, and after an absence of three days came back with a worm in her beak, called thumare. This she dropped on the glass, and by the power of the worm, the glass was shivered, and the young flew away after their mother. When the Emperor saw this, he highly commended both the affection and the sagacity of the ostrich. On which we may remark, that a portion of that sagacity was wanting to those who applied the myth to that bird which of all others is singularly deficient in the qualities with which Diocletian credited it. Similar stories are told by Vincent of Beauvais in his "Historical Mirror[5]," and by gossiping, fable-loving, and delightful Gervase of Tilbury[6]. The latter says that Solomon cut the stones of the temple with the blood of a little worm called thamir, which when sprinkled on the marble, made it easy to split. And the way in which Solomon obtained the worm was this. He had an ostrich, whose chick he put in a glass bottle. Seeing this, the ostrich ran to the desert, and brought the worm, and with its blood fractured the vessel. "And in our time, in the reign of Pope Alexander III.,

[5] Vincent Bellov., Spec. Nat. 20, 170.

[6] Gervasii Tilberiensis Otia Imp., ed. Liebrecht. Hanov. 1856, p. 48.

when I was a boy, there was found at Rome, a vial full of milky liquid, which, when sprinkled on any kinds of stone, made them receive such sculpture as the hand of the graver was wont to execute. It was a vial discovered in a most ancient palace, the matter and art of which was a subject of wonder to the Roman people."

Gervase drew from Comestor (Regum lib. iii. c. 5).

"If you wish to burst chains," says Albertus Magnus[7], "go into the wood, and look for a woodpecker's nest, where there are young; climb the tree, and choke the mouth of the nest with any thing you like. As soon as she sees you do this, she flies off for a plant, which she lays on the stoppage; this bursts, and the plant falls to the ground under the tree, where you must have a cloth spread for receiving it." But then, says Albertus, this is a fancy of the Jews[8].

Conrad von Megenburg relates: "There is a bird which in Latin is called merops, but which we in German term Bömheckel (i.e. Baumhacker), which nests in high trees, and when one covers its children with something to impede the approach of the bird,

[7] De Mirab. Mundi. Argent. 1601, p. 225.
[8] De Animalibus. Mantua, 1479, ult. pag.

it brings a herb, and holds it over the obstacle, and it gives way. The plant is called *herba merops*, or woodpecker-plant, and is called in magical books *chora*[9]."

In Normandy, the swallow knows how to find upon the sea-beach a pebble which has the marvellous power of restoring sight to the blind. The peasants tell of a certain way of obtaining possession of this stone. You must put out the eyes of a swallow's young, whereupon the mother-bird will immediately go in quest of the stone. When she has found it and applied it, she will endeavour to make away with the talisman, that none may discover it. But if one has taken the precaution to spread a piece of scarlet cloth below the nest, the swallow, mistaking it for fire, will drop the stone upon it.

I met with the story in Iceland. There the natives tell that there is a stone of such wondrous power, that the possessor can walk invisible, can, at a wish, provide himself with as much stock-fish and corn-brandy as he may desire, can raise the dead, cure disease, and break bolts and bars. In order to obtain this prize, one must hard-boil an egg from

[9] Apud Mone, Anzeiger, viii. p. 614.

the raven's nest, then replace it, and secrete oneself till the mother-bird, finding one of her eggs resist all her endeavours to infuse warmth into it, flies off and brings a black pebble in her beak, with which she touches the boiled egg, and restores it to its former condition. At this moment she must be shot, and the stone be secured.

In this form of the superstition schamir has the power of giving life. This probably connects it with those stories, so rife in the middle ages, of birds or weasels, which were able to restore the dead to life by means of a mysterious plant. Avicenna relates in his eighth book, "Of Animals," that it was related to him by a faithful old man, that he had seen two little birds squabbling, and that one was overcome; it therefore retired and ate of a certain herb, then it returned to the onslaught; which when the old man observed frequently, he took away the herb, and when the bird came and found the plant gone, it set up a great cry and died. And this plant was *lactua agrestis*.

In Fouqué's "Sir Elidoc," a little boy Amyot is watching by a dead lady laid out in the church, when "suddenly I heard a loud cry from the child. I looked up, a little creature glided by me; the shepherd's staff of the boy flew after it; the creature

lay dead, stretched on the ground by the blow. It was a weasel. . . . Presently there came a second weasel, as if to seek his comrade, and when he found him dead, a mournful scene began; he touched him as if to say, 'Wake up, wake up, let us play together!' And when the other little animal lay dead and motionless, the living one sprang back from him in terror, and then repeated the attempt again and again, many times. Its bright little eyes shone sadly, as if they were full of tears. The sorrowful creature seemed as though it suddenly bethought itself of something. It erected its ears, it looked round with its bright eyes, and then swiftly darted away. And before Amyot and I could ask each other of the strange sight, the little animal returned again, bearing in its mouth a root, a root to which grew a red flower; I had never before seen such a flower blowing; I made a sign to Amyot, and we both remained motionless. The weasel came up quickly, and laid the root and the flower gently on its companion's mouth; the creature, but now stiff in death, stretched itself, and suddenly sprang up, with the root still in its mouth. I called to Amyot, 'The root! take it, take it, but do not kill!' Again he flung his staff, but so dexterously that he killed neither of the weasels, nor even

hurt them. The root of life and the red blossoms lay on the ground before me, and in my power." With this, naturally enough, the lady who is speaking restores the corpse to life. Sir Elidoc is founded on a Breton legend, the Lai d'Eliduc of Marie de France; but another tale from the same country makes the flower yellow; it is a marigold, which, when touched on a certain morning by the bare foot of one who has a pure heart, gives the power to understand the language of birds[1]. This is the same story as that of Polyidus and Glaucus. Polyidus observed a serpent stealing towards the corpse of the young prince. He slew it; then came another serpent, and finding its companion dead, it fetched a root by which it restored life to the dead serpent. Polyidus obtained possession of the plant, and therewith revived Glaucus[2]. In the Greek romance of Rhodante and Dosicles is an incident of similar character. Rhodante swallows a poisoned goblet of wine, and lies as one dead, deprived of sense and motion. In the meanwhile, Dosicles and Cratander are chasing wild beasts in the forest. There they find a wounded bear, which seeks a certain plant, and, rolling upon it, recovers health

[1] Bode, Volksmährchen a. d. Bretagne. Leipz. 1847, p. 6.
[2] Apollodorus, ii. 3.

and vigour instantaneously. The root of this herb was white, its flowers of a rosy hue, attached to a stalk of purplish tinge. Dosicles picked the herb, and with it returned to the house where he found Rhodante apparently dead; with the wondrous plant he, however, was able to restore her. The same story is told in Germany, in Lithuania, among the modern Greeks and ancient Scandinavians.

Germany teems with stories of the marvellous properties of the Luckflower.

A man chances to pluck a beautiful flower, which in most instances is blue, and this he puts in his breast, or in his hat. Passing along a mountain side, he sees the rocks gape before him, and entering, he sees a beautiful lady, who bids him help himself freely to the gold which is scattered on all sides in profusion. He crams the glittering nuggets into his pockets, and is about to leave, when she calls after him, "Forget not the best!" Thinking that she means him to take more, he feels his crammed pockets, and finding that he has nothing to reproach himself with in that respect, he seeks the light of day, entirely forgetting the precious blue flower which had opened to him the rocks, and which has dropped on the ground.

As he hurries through the doorway, the rocks

close upon him with a thunder-crash and cut off his heel. The mountain-side is thenceforth closed to him for ever.

Once upon a time a shepherd was driving his flock over the Ilsenstein, when, wearied with his tramp, he leaned upon his staff. Instantly the mountain opened, for in that staff was the "Spring-wort." Within he saw the Princess Ilse, who bade him fill his pockets with gold. The shepherd obeyed, and was going away, when the princess exclaimed, "Forget not the best!" alluding to his staff, which lay against the wall. But he, misunderstanding her, took more gold, and the mountain clashing together, severed him in twain. In some versions of the story, it is the pale blue flower—

> "The blue flower, which—Bramins say—
> Blooms nowhere but in Paradise"—
> (*Lalla Rookh*)

which exclaims in feeble, piteous tone, "Forget-me-not!" but its little cry is unheeded.

Thus originated the name of the beautiful little flower. When this story was forgotten, a romantic fable was invented to account for the peculiar appellation.

In the story of Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves,

it is a word, "sesame," which makes the rocks part, and gives admission to the treasures within; and it is oblivion of the magic word which brings destruction upon the luckless wretch within. But sesame is the name of a well-known eastern plant, *sesamum orientale;* so that probably in the original form of the Persian tale absorbed into the Arabian Nights, a flower was employed to give admission to the mountain. But classic antiquity has also its rock-breaking plant, the *saxifraga,* whose tender rootlets penetrate and dissolve the hardest stones with a force for which the Ancients were unable to account.

Isaiah, describing the desolation of the vineyard of Zion, says that "There shall come up briars and thorns" (v. 6), לשמיר ולשית יהיה (vii. 23: cf. also ix. 17; x. 17). And, "Upon the land of my people shall come up thorns and briars" (xxxii. 13), where שמיר is combined with קוץ. The word שית never stands alone, but is always joined with שמיר, which the LXX render *ἄκανθα καὶ χόρτος*; the word in the fifth chapter they render *χέρσος ἄκανθαι*; that in the seventh, *χέρσος* and *ἄκανθα*; so that *χέρσος* is put for שמיר, and *ἄκανθα* for שית. The word in the ninth chapter is *ἄγρωστις ξηρά,* that in the tenth, *ὡσεὶ χόρτον τὴν*

ὕλην. Upon both names the translators are not agreed. Now, this word "smiris" is used by Isaiah alone as the name of a plant. The smiris, as we have seen, is a stone-breaking substance, and the same idea which is rendered in Latin by *saxifraga* is given in the Hebrew word used by Isaiah, so that we may take שמיר ושית to mean saxifraga and thorn[3]. In the North, we have another object, to which are attributed the same properties as to the "Springwort" and schamir, and that is the Hand of Glory. This is the hand of a man who has been hung, and it is prepared in the following manner: wrap the hand in a piece of winding-sheet, drawing it tight, so as to squeeze out the little blood which may remain; then place it in an earthenware vessel with saltpetre, salt, and long pepper, all carefully and thoroughly powdered. Let it remain a fortnight in this pickle till it is well dried, then expose it to the sun in the dog-days, till it is completely parched, or, if the sun be not powerful enough, dry it in an oven heated with vervain and

[3] Cassel, Ueber Schamir, in Denkschrift d. Königl. Akad. der Wissenschaften. Erfurt, 1856, p. 76. The Oriental word "smiris" passed into use among the Greeks as the name of the hardest substance known, used in polishing stones, and is retained in the German "Smirgel," and the English "emery."

fern. Next make a candle with the fat of a hung man, virgin-wax, and Lapland sesame. Observe the use of this herb: the hand of glory is used to hold this candle when it is lighted[4]. Douster Swivel, in the "Antiquary," adds, "You do make a candle, and put into de hand of glory at de proper hour and minute, with de proper ceremonisth; and he who seeksh for treasuresh shall find none at all!" Southey places it in the hands of the enchanter Mohareb, when he would lull to sleep Yohak, the giant guardian of the caves of Babylon. He—

"From his wallet drew a human hand,
Shrivell'd, and dry, and black;
And fitting, as he spake,
A taper in his hold,
Pursued: 'A murderer on the stake had died;
I drove the vulture from his limbs, and lopt
The hand that did the murder, and drew up
The tendon strings to close its grasp;
And in the sun and wind
Parch'd it, nine weeks exposed.
The taper . . . But not here the place to impart,
Nor hast thou undergone the rites
That fit thee to partake the mystery.
Look! it burns clear, but with the air around,
Its dead ingredients mingle deathliness[5].'"

Several stories of this terrible hand are related in

[4] Collin de Plancy, Dictionnaire Infernal. Paris, 1818.
[5] Thalaba the Destroyer, book v.

Henderson's "Folklore of the Northern Counties of England." I will only quote one, which was told me by a labouring man in the West Riding of Yorkshire, and which is the same story as that given by Martin Anthony Delrio in his "Disquisitiones Magicæ," in 1593, and which is printed in the Appendix to that book of M. Henderson.

One dark night, after the house had been closed, there came a tap at the door of a lone inn, in the midst of a barren moor.

The door was opened, and there stood without, shivering and shaking, a poor beggar, his rags soaked with rain, and his hands white with cold. He asked piteously for a lodging, and it was cheerfully granted him; though there was not a spare bed in the house, he might lie along on the mat before the kitchen fire, and welcome.

All in the house went to bed except the servant lassie, who from the kitchen could see into the large room through a small pane of glass let into the door. When every one save the beggar was out of the room, she observed the man draw himself up from the floor, seat himself at the table, extract a brown withered human hand from his pocket, and set it upright in the candlestick; he then anointed the fingers, and, apply-

ing a match to them, they began to flame. Filled with horror, the girl rushed up the back stairs, and endeavoured to arouse her master and the men of the house; but all in vain, they slept a charmed sleep; and finding all her efforts ineffectual, she hastened downstairs again. Looking again through the small window, she observed the fingers of the hand flaming, but the thumb gave no light: this was because one of the inmates of the house was not asleep. The beggar began collecting all the valuables of the house into a large sack—no lock withstood the application of the flaming hand. Then, putting it down, the man entered an adjoining apartment. The moment he was gone, the girl rushed in, and seizing the hand, attempted to extinguish the quivering yellow flames, which wavered at the fingers' ends. She blew at them in vain; she poured some drops from a beer-jug over them, but that only made the fingers burn the brighter; she cast some water upon them, but still without extinguishing the light. As a last resource, she caught up a jug of milk, and dashing it over the four lambent flames, they went out immediately.

Uttering a piercing cry, she rushed to the door

of the room the beggar had entered, and locked it. The whole house was aroused, and the thief was secured and hung.

We must not forget Tom Ingoldsby's rendering of a similar legend :—

"Open, lock,
To the Dead Man's knock!
Fly, bolt, and bar, and band!
Nor move, nor swerve,
Joint, muscle, or nerve,
At the spell of the Dead Man's hand!
Sleep, all who sleep!—Wake, all who wake!
But be as the dead for the Dead Man's sake!

"Now lock, nor bolt, nor bar avails,
Nor stout oak panel thick-studded with nails.
Heavy and harsh the hinges creak,
Though they had been oil'd in the course of the week.
The door opens wide as wide may be,
And there they stand,
That murderous band,
Lit by the light of the GLORIOUS HAND,
By one!—by two!—by three!"

But, instead of pursuing the fable through its further ramifications, let us apply the schamir of comparative mythology to the myth itself, and see whether before it the bolts do not give way, and the great doors of the cavern of mysteries expand, and discover to us the origin of the superstitious belief in this sea-prince's

worm, the stone of wisdom, sesame, forget-me-not, or the hand of glory.

What are its effects?

It bursts locks, and shatters stones, it opens in the mountains the hidden treasures hitherto concealed from men, or it paralyzes, lulling into a magic sleep, or, again, it restores to life.

I believe the varied fables relate to one and the same object—and that, the lightning.

But what is the bird which bears schamir, the worm or stone which shatters rocks? It is the storm-cloud, which in many a mythology of ancient days was supposed to be a mighty bird. In Greek iconography, Zeus, "the æther in his moist arms embracing the earth," as Euripides describes him, is armed with the thunderbolt, and accompanied by the eagle, a symbol of the cloud.

> "The refulgent heaven above,
> Which all men call, unanimously, Jove [6],"

has for its essential attributes the cloud and its bolt, and when the æther was represented under human form, the cloud was given shape as a bird. It is the same storm-cloud which as "blood-

[6] Cicero, De N. Deorum, xvi.

thirsting eagle" banquets its "full on the black viands of the liver" of Prometheus. The same cloud in its fury is symbolized by the Phorcidæ with their flashing eye and lightning tooth—

> *πρὸς Γοργόνεια πεδία Κισθήνης, ἵνα*
> *αἱ Φορκίδες ναίουσι δηναιαὶ κόραι*
> *τρεῖς κυκνόμορφοι, κοινὸν ὄμμ' ἐκτημέναι,*
> *μονόδοντες, ἃς οὔθ' ἥλιος προσδέρκεται*
> *ἀκτῖσιν, οὔθ' ἡ νύκτερος μήνη ποτέ.*
>
> (ÆSCH. *Prom.*),

and also by the ravening harpies. In ancient Indian mythology, the delicate white cirrus cloud drifting overhead was a fleeting swan, and so it was as well in the creed of the Scandinavian, whilst the black clouds were ravens coursing over the earth, and returning to whisper the news in the ear of listening Odin. The rushing vapour is the roc of the Arabian Nights, which broods over its great luminous egg, the sun, and which haunts the sparkling valley of diamonds, the starry sky. The resemblance traced between bird and cloud is not far fetched: it recurs to the modern poet as it did to the Psalmist, when he spoke of the "wings of the wind." If the cloud was supposed to be a great bird, the lightnings were regarded as writhing worms or serpents in its beak. These fiery serpents, *ἑλικίαι γραμμο-*

εἰδῶς φερόμενοι, are believed in to this day by the Canadian Indians, who call the thunder their hissing. It was these heavenly reptiles which were supposed by the Druids to generate the sun, the famous anguineum so coveted and so ill comprehended. The thunderbolt shattering all it struck, was regarded as the stone dropped by the cloud-bird. A more forced resemblance is that supposed to exist between the lightning and a heavenly flower, blue, or yellow, or red, and yet there is evidence, upon which I cannot enter here, that so it was regarded.

The lightning-flashing cloud was also supposed to be a flaming hand. The Greek placed the forked dart in the hand of Zeus—

> "rubente
> Dextera sacras jaculatus arces;"

and the ancient Mexican symbolized the sacrificial fire by a blood-red hand impressed on his sanctuary walls. The idea may have been present in the mind of the servant of Elijah when he told his master that he saw from the top of Carmel rising "A little cloud out of the sea, like a man's hand. And it came to pass, that the heaven was black with clouds and wind, and there was a great rain" (1 Kings xviii. 44). In Finnish and Esthonian

mythology, the cloud is a little man with a copper hand, who, rising from the water, becomes a giant.

The black cloud with the lambent flames issuing from it was the original of the magical hand of glory.

The effects produced by the lightning are differently expressed. As shattering the rocks, schamir is easily intelligible. It is less so as giving access to the hidden treasures of the mountains. The ancient Aryan had the same name for cloud and mountain. To him the piles of vapour on the horizon were so like Alpine ranges, that he had but one word whereby to designate both. These great mountains of heaven were opened by the lightning. In the sudden flash he beheld the dazzling splendour within, but only for a moment, and then, with a crash, the celestial rocks closed again. Believing these vaporous piles to contain resplendent treasures of which partial glimpse was obtained by mortals in a momentary gleam, tales were speedily formed, relating the adventures of some who had succeeded in entering these treasure-mountains. The plant of life, brought by weasel or serpent, restores life to one who was dead. This myth was forged in Eastern lands, where the earth apparently dies from a protracted drought. Then comes the

cloud. The lightning flash reaches the barren, dead, and thirsty land; forth gush the waters of heaven, and the parched vegetation bursts once more into the vigour of life, restored after suspended animation. It is the dead and parched vegetation which is symbolized by Glaucus, and the earth still and without the energy of life which is represented by the lady in the Lai d'Eliduc. This reviving power is attributed in mythology to the rain as well. In Sclavonic myths, it is the water of life which restores the dead earth, a water brought by a bird from the depths of a gloomy cave. A prince has been murdered,—that is, the earth is dead; then comes the eagle bearing a vial of the reviving water—the cloud with the rain; it sprinkles the corpse with the precious drops, and life returns [7].

But the hand of glory has a very different property—it paralyzes. In this it resembles the Gorgon's head or the basilisk. The head of Medusa, with its flying serpent locks, is unquestionably the storm-cloud; and the basilisk which strikes dead with its eye is certainly the

[7] Compare with this the Psyche in "The Golden Ass," and the Fair One with the Golden Locks of the Countess d'Aulnay.

same. The terror inspired by the outburst of the thunder-storm is expressed in fable by the paralyzing effect of the eye of the cockatrice, the exhibition of the Gorgon's countenance, and the waving of the glorious hand.

Strained as some of these explanations may seem, they are nevertheless true. We, with our knowledge of the causes producing meteorological phenomena, are hardly able to realize the extravagance of the theories propounded by the ignorant to account for them.

How Finn cosmogenists could have believed the earth and heaven to be made out of a severed egg, the upper concave shell representing heaven, the yolk being earth, and the crystal surrounding fluid the circumambient ocean, is to us incomprehensible: and yet it remains a fact that so they did regard them. How the Scandinavians could have supposed the mountains to be the mouldering bones of a mighty Jötun, and the earth to be his festering flesh, we cannot conceive: yet such a theory was solemnly taught and accepted. How the ancient Indians could regard the rain-clouds as cows with full udders, milked by the winds of heaven, is beyond our comprehension, and yet their Veda contains

indisputable testimony to the fact that so they were regarded.

Nonnus Dionysius (v. 163 et seq.) spoke of the moon as a luminous white stone, and Democritus regarded the stars as πέτρους. Lucretius considered the sun as a wheel (v. 433), and Ovid as a shield—

> "Ipse Dei clypeus, terra cum tollitur ima,
> Mane rubet: terraque rubet, cum conditur ima.
> Candidus in summo . . . ."—(*Metam.* xv. 192 sq.)

As late as 1600, a German writer would illustrate a thunder-storm destroying a crop of corn by a picture of a dragon devouring the produce of the field with his flaming tongue and iron teeth (Wolfii Memorabil. ii. p. 505); and at the present day children are taught that the thunder-crash is the voice of the Almighty.

The restless mind of man, ever seeking a reason to account for the marvels presented to his senses, adopts one theory after another, and the rejected explanations encumber the memory of nations as myths, the significance of which has been forgotten.

The Piper of Hameln

HAMELN town was infested with rats, in the year 1284. In their houses the people had no peace from them; rats disturbed them by night and worried them by day—

> "They fought the dogs, and kill'd the cats,
> And bit the babies in the cradles,
> And ate the cheeses out of the vats,
> And lick'd the soup from the cook's own ladles,
> Split open the kegs of salted sprats,
> Made nests inside men's Sunday hats,
> And even spoil'd the women's chats,
> By drowning their speaking
> With shrieking and squeaking
> In fifty different sharps and flats."

One day, there came a man into the town, most quaintly attired in parti-coloured suit. Bunting the man was called, after his dress. None knew whence he came, or who he was. He announced himself to be a rat-catcher, and offered for a certain

sum of money to rid the place of the vermin. The townsmen agreed to his proposal, and promised him the sum demanded. Thereupon the man drew forth a pipe and piped.

"And ere three shrill notes the pipe utter'd,
You heard as if an army mutter'd;
And the muttering grew to a grumbling,
And the grumbling grew to a mighty rumbling:
And out of the town the rats came tumbling.
Great rats, small rats, lean rats, brawny rats,
Brown rats, black rats, grey rats, tawny rats,
Grave old plodders, gay young friskers,
Fathers, mothers, uncles, cousins,
Cocking tails and pricking whiskers;
Families by tens and dozens,
Brothers, sisters, husbands, wives,
Follow'd the Piper for their lives.
From street to street he piped advancing,
Until they came to the river Weser,
Wherein all plunged and perish'd."

No sooner were the townsfolk released from their torment, than they repented of their bargain, and, on the plea that the rat-destroyer was a sorcerer, they refused to pay the stipulated remuneration. At this the piper waxed wrath, and vowed vengeance. On the 26th June, the feast of SS. John and Paul, the mysterious Piper reappeared in Hameln town—

"Once more he stept into the street,
And to his lips again

Laid his long pipe of smooth, straight cane ;
And, ere he blew three notes (such sweet,
Soft notes as yet musician's cunning
Never gave to the enraptured air),
There was a rustling, that seem'd like a bustling
Of merry crowds justling, at pitching and hustling,
Small feet were pattering, wooden shoes clattering,
Little hands clapping, and little tongues chattering :
And, like fowls in a farmyard where barley is scattering,
Out came the children running.
All the little boys and girls,
With rosy cheeks and flaxen curls,
And sparkling eyes, and teeth like pearls,
Tripping, skipping, ran merrily after
The wonderful music with shouting and laughter."

The Piper led the way down the street, the children all following, whilst the Hameln people stood aghast, not knowing what step to take, or what would be the result of this weird piping. He led them from the town towards a hill rising above the Weser—

"When, lo ! as they reach'd the mountain's side,
A wondrous portal open'd wide,
As if a cavern were suddenly hollow'd ;
And the piper advanced, and the children follow'd ;
And when all were in, to the very last,
The door in the mountain side shut fast."

No ! not all. Two remained : the one blind, and the other dumb. The dumb child pointed out the spot where the children had vanished, and the blind

boy related his sensations when he heard the piper play. In other accounts, the lad was lame, and he alone was left; and in after years he was sad. And thus he accounted for his settled melancholy—

"It's dull in our town since my playmates left;
I can't forget that I'm bereft
Of all the pleasant sights they see,
Which the piper also promised me;
For he led us, he said, to a joyous land,
Joining the town, and just at hand,
Where waters gush'd, and fruit-trees grew,
And flowers put forth a fairer hue,
And every thing was strange and new;
And sparrows were brighter than peacocks here,
And their dogs outran our fallow deer,
And honey bees had lost their stings,
And horses were born with eagle's wings;
And just as I became assured
My lame foot would be speedily cured,
The music stopp'd, and I stood still,
And found myself outside the hill,
Left alone against my will,
To go now limping as before,
And never hear of that country more."

The number of children that perished was one hundred and thirty. Fathers and mothers rushed to the east gate, but when they came to the mountain, called Koppenberg, into which the train had disappeared, nothing was observable except a small hollow, where the sorcerer and their little ones had entered.

The street through which the piper went is called the Bungen-Strasse, because no music, no drum (Bunge), may be played in it. If a bridal procession passes through it, the music must cease until it is out of it. It is not long since two moss-grown crosses on the Koppenberg marked the spot where the little ones vanished. On the wall of a house in the town is written, in gold characters—

"Anno 1284 am dage Johannis et Pauli war der 26. Junii dorch einen piper mit allerlei farve bekledet gewesen 130 kinder verledet binnen Hameln gebon to Calvarie, bi den Koppen verloren."

On the Rathhaus was sculptured, in memory of the event—

"Im Jahr 1284 na Christi gebert
Tho Hamel worden uthgevert
hundert und dreiszig kinder dasülvest geborn
durch einen Piper under den Köppen verlorn."

And on the new gate—

"Centum ter denos cum magus ab urbe puellos
Duxerat ante annos CCLXXII condita porta fuit."

For long, so profound was the impression produced by the event, the town dated its public documents from this calamity [1].

[1] Thorpe, Northern Mythology, iii. 119; and Grimm, Deutsche Sagen, Berlin, 1866, i. p. 245. Grimm has collected a list of authorities who speak of the event as an historical fact.

Similar stories are told of other places. A man with a violin came once to Brandenburg, and walked through the town fiddling. All the children followed him: he led them to the Marienberg, which opened and admitted him and the little ones, and, closing upon them, left none behind. At one time, the fields about Lorch were devastated with ants. The Bishop of Worms instituted a procession and litanies to obtain the deliverance of his people from the plague. As the procession approached the Lake of Lorch, a hermit came to meet it, and offered to rid the neighbourhood of the ants, if the farmers would erect a chapel on the site, at the cost of a hundred gulden. When they consented, he drew forth a pipe and piped so sweetly that all the insects came about him; and he led them to the water, into which he plunged with them. Then he asked for the money, but it was refused. Whereupon he piped again, and all the pigs followed him: he led them into the lake, and vanished with them.

Next year a swarm of crickets ate up the herbage; the people were in despair. Again they went in procession, and were met by a charcoal-burner, who promised to destroy the insects, if the people would expend five hundred gulden on a chapel. Then he piped, and the crickets followed him into

the water. Again the people refused to pay the stipulated sum, thereupon the charcoal-burner piped all their sheep into the lake. The third year comes a plague of rats. A little old man of the mountain this time offers to free the land of the vermin for a thousand gulden. He pipes them into the Tannenberg; then the farmers again button up their pockets, whereupon the little man pipes all their children away [2].

In the Hartz mountains once passed a strange musician with a bagpipe. Each time that he played a tune a maiden died. In this manner he caused the death of fifty girls, and then he vanished with their souls [3].

It is singular that a similar story should exist in Abyssinia. It is related by Harrison, in his "Highlands of Æthiopia," that the Hadjiuji Madjuji are dæmon pipers, who, riding on a goat, traverse a hamlet, and, by their music, irresistibly draw the children after them to destruction.

The soul, in German mythology, is supposed to bear some analogy to a mouse. In Thuringia, at Saalfeld, a servant-girl fell asleep whilst her com-

[2] Wolf, Beiträge zur Deutschen Mythologie. Göttingen, 1852, i. 171.

[3] Pröhle, Mährchen, No. 14.

panions were shelling nuts. They observed a little red mouse creep from her mouth and run out of the window. One of the fellows present shook the sleeper, but could not wake her, so he moved her to another place. Presently the mouse ran back to the former place, and dashed about seeking the girl: not finding her, it vanished; at the same moment, the girl died [4].

Akin to the story of the piper is that made familiar to us by Goethe's poem, the Erlking.

A father is riding late at night with his child wrapped in a mantle. The little fellow hears the erlking chanting in his ear, and promising him the glories of Elf-land, where his daughters dance and sing, awaiting him, if he will follow. The father hushes the child, and bids him not to listen, for it is only the whistling of the wind among the trees. But the song has lured the little soul away, and when the father unfolds his mantle, the child is dead.

It is curious that a trace of this myth should remain among the Wesleyans. From my experience of English dissenters, I am satisfied that their religion is, to a greater extent than any one has sup-

[4] Prætorius, i. 40.

posed, a revival of ancient paganism, which has long lain dormant among the English peasantry. A Wesleyan told me one day that he was sure his little servant-girl was going to die; for the night before, as he had lain awake, he had heard an angel piping to her in the adjoining room; the music was inexpressibly sweet, like the warbling of a flute. "And when t'aingels gang that road," said the Yorkshire man, "they're boun to tak bairns' souls wi' em." I know several cases of Wesleyans declaring that they were going to die, because they had heard voices singing to them, which none but themselves had distinguished, telling them of the—

> "—— happy land
> Far, far away,"

precisely as the piper of Hameln's notes seemed to the lame lad to speak of a land—

> "Where flowers put forth a fairer hue,
> And every thing was strange and new."

And I have heard of a death being accounted for by a band of music playing in the neighbourhood. "When t'music was agaite, her soul was forced to be off."

A hymn by the late Dr. Faber, now very popular, is unquestionably founded on this ancient

superstition, and is probably an unconscious revival of early dissenting reminiscences.

"Hark! hark, my soul! Angelic songs are swelling
O'er earth's green fields and ocean's wave-beat shore:
How sweet the truth those blessed strains are telling
Of that new life when sin shall be no more!

"Onward we go, for still we hear them singing,
Come, weary souls, for Jesus bids you come:
And through the dark, its echoes sweetly ringing,
The music of the Gospel leads us home.
Angels of Jesus, Angels of Light,
Singing to welcome the pilgrims of the night."

An idea which I have myself consciously adopted in a hymn on the severing of Jordan (People's Hymnal, 3), upon the principle which led the early Christians to adopt the figure of Orpheus as a symbol of Christ.

"Sweet angels are calling to me from yon shore,
Come over, come over, and wander no more."

The music which our English dissenters consider as that of angels' singing, is attributed by the Germans to the Elves, and their song is called Alpleich or Elfenreigen. Children are cautioned not to listen to it, or believe in the promises made in the weird spirit-song. If they hearken, then Frau Holle, the ancient goddess Hulda, takes them to wander with her in the forests.

A young man heard the music, and was filled with

an irresistible longing to be with Dame Holle. Three days after he died, and it was said of him, "He preferred the society of Frau Hulda to heaven, and now till the judgment he must wander with her in the forest[5]." In like manner, in Scandinavian ballads, we are told of youths who were allured away by the sweet strains of the Elf maidens[6]. Their music is called *ellfr-lck*, in Icelandic *liuflingslag*, in Norwegian *Huldreslát*.

The reader will have already become conscious that these northern myths resemble the classic fable of the Sirens, with their magic lay; of Ulysses with his ears open, bound to the mast, longing to rush to their arms, and perish.

The root of the myth is this: the piper is no other than the wind, and ancients held that in the wind were the souls of the dead. All over England the peasants believe still that the spirits of unbaptized children wander in it, and that the wail at their doors and windows are the cries of the little souls condemned to journey till the last day. The ancient German goddess Hulda was ever accompanied by a crowd of children's souls, and Odin in his wild hunt rushed over the tree-tops, accompa-

[5] Zeitschrift für Deutsche Myth. i. 27.

[6] Svenska fornsanger, 2. 308. Danske viser, i. 235—240.

nied by the scudding train of brave men's spirits. It is because the soul is thought to travel on the wind, that we open the window to let a dying person breathe his last. Often have I had it repeated to me that the person *in extremis* could not die, that he struggled to die, but was unable till the casement was thrown open, and then at once his spirit escaped.

In one of the Icelandic sagas we have a strange story of a man standing at his house-door, and seeing the souls go by in the air, and among the souls was his own; he told the tale and died.

In Greek mythology, Hermes Psychopompos carries the spirits of the dead to Hades; and in Egyptian fable, Thoth performs the same office. I am satisfied that we have in Hermes two entirely distinct divinities run into one, through the confusion of similar names, that the Pelasgic, Ithyphallic Hermes is an entirely distinct god from the tricksy, thievish youth with winged feet and fluttering mantle. The Pelasgic Hermes (from ἔρμα) is the sun as generator of life, whilst the other Hermes (from ὁρμή) is the impetuous wind, whose representative Saramâ exists as the gale in Indian mythology. Hermes Psychopompos is therefore the wind bearing away the souls of the dead. He has other

atmospheric characteristics: the flying cloak, a symbol of the drifting cloud,—as Odin, the rushing of storm, is also Hekluberandi, the mantle-bearer; the winged Talaria, emblems of the swiftness of his flight; and the lyre, wherewith he closes the thousand eyes of Argos, the starry firmament, signifying the music of the blast.

The very names given to the soul, *animus*, ἄνεμος or *spiritus*, and *athem*, signify wind or breath, and point to the connexion which was supposed to exist between them. Our word Ghost, the German *Geist*, is from a root "gîsan," to gush and blow, as does the wind.

In the classic Sirens we cannot fail to detect the wailing of the rising storm in the cordage, which is likely to end in shipwrecks. The very name of Siren is from συρίζω, to pipe or whistle[7], just as their representatives in Vedic mythology, the Ribhus, draw their name from *rebh*, to sound, to which the Greek ῥοιβδέω is akin. The Sirens are themselves winged beings[8], rushing over the earth, seeking every where the lost Persephone.

But the piping wind does not merely carry with it the souls of the dead, and give the mariner

[7] Cognate words, Lat. *susurrus*, Sanskrit *svri*, to sound.
[8] Eurip. Hel. 167.

warning of approaching wreck: it does something besides. Let us lie on a hill-side, and watch the rising gale. All is still and motionless. Presently we hear the whistle in the grass, and then every herb and tree is set in agitation. The trees toss from side to side, and the flowers waver, and rock their bells. All are set dancing, and cannot stop till the piping has ceased. In this we have the rudiment of another myth, that of the musical instrument which, when played, sets every thing a-capering.

Grimm has a story to this effect: a lad obtains a bow which will bring down any thing he aims at, and a fiddle which, when scraped, will make all who hear it dance. He shoots a bird, and it falls into a bush of thorns; a Jew goes into the bush to get the bird, then the lad strikes up a tune on his instrument, and makes the Jew dance in the bush till he has paid him a large sum to obtain rest. In a Walachian story it is the Almighty who gives the lad a bagpipe. The tale runs thus: a boy runs away from his brother with a quern; on the approach of night he hides in a tree. Some robbers come beneath the tree, and spread out their spoils. The lad drops the mill-stone, which puts the robbers to flight, and he thus obtains the gold. Then the

story runs on like that of Grimm, only the Jew is replaced by a priest (Schott, xxii).

The same story is found among the modern Greeks, and the hero has a pipe, and his name is Bakala [9].

We have a similar tale in England, published by Wynkyn de Worde, entitled "A merry Geste of the Frere and the Boye," in which the lad receives—

> "——— a bowe
> Byrdes to shete"

and a pipe of marvellous power—

> "All that may the pype here
> Shall not themselfe stere,
> But laugh and lepe about [1]."

In the Icelandic Herauds ok Bosa Saga, which rests on mythologic foundation, a harp occurs which belonged to a certain Sigurd. Bosi slays Sigurd, puts on his skin and clothes, and taking the harp, goes in this disguise to the banquet-hall of king Godmund, where his true-love is about to be wed to another man. He plays the harp, and the knives and plates, the tables and stools, then the guests, and lastly the monarch himself, are set dancing. He keeps them capering till they are too

[9] Von Hahn, Griechische Mährchen, No 34.
[1] Ritson, Pieces of Ancient Poetry.

exhausted to move a limb; then he casts the bride over his shoulder and makes off[2].

In the mediæval romance of Huon de Bordeaux, Oberon's horn has the same properties; and in a Spanish tale of the Fandango, at the strains of the tune, the Pope and cardinals are made to dance and jig about.

In that most charming collection of fairy tales, made in Southern Ireland by Mr. Crofton Croker, we meet with the same wonderful tune; but the fable relating to it has suffered in the telling, and the parts have been inverted. Maurice Connor, the blind piper, could play an air which could set every thing, alive or dead, capering. In what way he learned it is not known. At the very first note of that tune the brogues began shaking upon the feet of all who heard it, old or young; then the feet began going, going from under them, and at last up and away with them, dancing like mad, whisking here, there, and every where, like a straw in a storm:—there was no halting while the music lasted. One day Maurice piped this tune on the sea-shore, and at once every inch of it was covered with all manner of fish, jumping and plunging about

[2] Fornmanna Sögur, iii. p. 221.

to the music; and every moment more and more would tumble out of the water, charmed by the wonderful tune. Crabs of monstrous size spun round and round on one claw with the nimbleness of a dancing-master, and twirled and tossed their other claws about like limbs that did not belong to them.

"John-dories came tripping;
Dull hake by their skipping
To frisk it seem'd given;
Bright mackrel came springing,
Like small rainbows winging
Their flight up to heaven;
The whiting and haddock
Left salt-water paddock
This dance to be put in,
Where skate with flat faces
Edged out some odd plaices;
But soles kept their footing."

Then up came a mermaid, and whispered to Maurice of the charms of the land beneath the sea, and the blind piper danced after her into the salt sea, followed by the fish, and was never seen more.

In Sclavonic tales the magical instrument has a quite opposite effect—it sends to sleep. This signifies the whistling autumn wind, chilling the earth and checking all signs of life and vegetation. But another magical harp—that is, the spring breeze—restores all to vigour. The sorcerer enchants with

the tones of his guzla, and all is hushed,—that is, the winter god sends the earth to sleep at the sound of his frozen gale; but, with the notes of the spring zephyr, the sun-god, golden-haired, revives creation, overcoming the charm[3].

It is this marvellous harp which was stolen by Jack when he climbed the bean-stalk to the upper world. In that story the ogre in the land above the skies, who was once the All-father, till Christianity made a monster of him, possessed three treasures: a harp which played of itself enchanting music, bags of gold and diamonds, and a hen which daily laid a golden egg. The harp is the wind, the bags are the clouds dropping the sparkling rain, and the golden egg, laid every morning by the red hen, is the dawn-produced sun. I have not space here to establish these two latter points, but they are repeated in so many cosmogonies, that there can be little doubt as to my interpretation being correct.

Among the Quiches of Guatemala, not a little to our surprise, the magic pipe which causes to dance is to be found. In their sacred book, the Popol-Vuh, the twins Hunahpu and Xbalanque turn their half-brothers into apes. Then they go

[3] Chodzko, Contes des Paysans Slaves, 1864.

to the mother, who asks where the lads are. The twins reply that she shall have them again, if she can behold them without laughing. Then they begin to play on their pipes; at the sound, the transformed brothers, Hunbatz and Hunchouen, are attracted from the forest to the house, they enter it and begin to dance. Their mother laughs at their comical gestures, and they vanish (Popol-Vuh, b. ii. c. 5).

I very much fear that I am leading my readers a sad dance, like one of these strange pipers; I only hope that I shall not, like the Sclavonic dæmon harper, send them to sleep. We must go a little further.

It is curious that the lyre-god Apollo should be called Smintheus, because he delivered Phrygia from a plague of rats. How he performed this feat we do not know; probably it was, after the manner of the Hameln piper, with his lyre, for we find that in Greek fable that instrument has powers attractive to the beasts attributed to it. The rats, as animals loving darkness, may have been regarded as symbols of night, and Apollo driving them from the land may have typified the sun scattering darkness.

Orpheus with his strains allured birds and beasts

around him, and made the trees and herbs to grow. The name Orpheus has been supposed to be identical with the Vedic Ribhus, which, no doubt, in its original form, was Arbhus. This, however, is not certain. Preller supposes Orpheus to come from the same root as ὄρφνη, ἔρεβος, and to signify gloom (Griechische Myth. ii. p. 486); but this is most improbable. He was a son of Apollo, and therefore probably a solar god.

It was hardly to be expected that such a charming and innocent myth as that of Orpheus should have been allowed to drop by the early Christians. They made a legitimate and graceful use of it in the catacombs, when they presented it as an allegory of Christ, who, by the sweet strains of His gospel, overcame brutish natures, making the wolf to lie down with the lamb. But a less justifiable adaptation of the figure was that of the mediæval hagiologists, when they took from Orpheus his lyre, and robbed him of his song, and split him into S. Francis and S. Anthony, the former with his preaching attracting the birds, the latter learnedly propounding scriptural types to the fishes.

It is curious that this Orpheus myth should be found scattered among Aryan and Turanian peoples.

In Sanskrit, it is told of Gunâdhya, in connexion with the Sibylline books story. The poet Gunâdhya, an incarnation of Mâljavân, writes with his own blood, in the forest, a mighty book of tales, in seven hundred thousand slokas. He then sends the book by his two pupils, Gunadeva and Nandideva, to king Sâtavâhana, but he rejects it as being composed in the Pisâcha dialect. Gunâdhya then ascends a mountain, and lights a great pile of firewood. He reads aloud his tales, and as he finishes each page, he casts it into the flames. Thus perish one hundred thousand slokas. Whilst the poet reads, stags, deer, bears, buffaloes, and roebucks, in short all the beasts of the forest, assemble and weep tears of delight at the beauty of the tales. In the mean time, the king falls ill, and the doctors order him game. But game is not to be found in the forest, for every living creature of the woods is listening to Gunâdhya. The huntsmen report this to the king, and the monarch hastens to the scene, and offers to buy the wondrous book. But, alas! by this time only one of the seven hundred thousand slokas remains [4].

But this is not the ancient form of the Indian myth. The poet Gunâdhya is the heavenly Mâl-

[4] Katha Sarit Sagara, i., c. 8.

javân incarnate, and the fable properly belongs to some of the heavenly musicians, the Ribhus, Maruts, or Gandharvas.

In the mythology of the Rig Veda, the Ribhus are skilled artists, whose element is the summer's gently stirring breeze. They are akin to the Maruts, the rough winds, with whom they unite in singing a magic song. The Arbhus became in Teutonic mythology the Alben, Elben or Elfen, our Elfs, and in Scandinavian the Alfar. The names are the same: Arbhus became altered into Albhu, by the change of the *r* into *l*; the *b* in the old German Elbe is replaced in modern German and Norse by an *f*.

The spring and summer breezes were deified by the ancient Aryans. According to the Rig Veda, they slumber in winter for twelve days, and when they waken, the earth is decked with flowers, the trees with foliage, and the floodgates of the streams are unlocked. These Ribhus were the offspring of Sudhanvan, the skilful archer, just as the classic Orpheus was the son of the bow-bearing Apollo. They are probably identical with the Gandharvas, heavenly musicians attending on Indra (Mahâbh. i. 4806). The name Gandharva is derived from *gandh*, to harass, injure, and was applied to them as

violent winds rending the clouds and scattering the leaves. They were represented as horses, and, according to some etymologists, are the originals of the Centaurs.

I remember one summer evening ascending a knoll in the district of the Landes in Southern France—once a region of moving sand-hills, now a vast tract of pine-forest. The air was fragrant with the breath of the fir-woods and the luscious exhalations of the flowery acacias. On all sides stretched the pines, basking in the sun, and rolling, like a green sea, to the snowy range of the Pyrenees, which hung in vaporous blue on the horizon—

> "Faintly-flush, phantom-fair—
> A thousand shadowy-pencill'd valleys
> And snowy dells in a golden air."

Perfect stillness reigned: not a sound from bird or beast was audible. Suddenly a strange, at first inexplicable, music vibrated through the air. Tender and distant, as though a thousand harp-strings were set a-quivering by the most delicate fingers, it rose up the scale by fractions of tones, and then descended again. Weird harmonies broke in upon and overflowed the melody, then ebbed away into sobs of music, again to reunite into a continued undulating chant. Not a breath stirred in my im-

mediate neighbourhood, but the music of the forest was unquestionably brought out by a partial breeze, at some little distance. Any thing more solemn and beautiful could hardly be conceived: it was not like earthly instrumental strains, nor like what we deem the music of the spheres—it was the voice of nature expressing its rapture. The Apostle tells us that Creation groans and travails in its pangs—it does so; but it at times exchanges these utterances of pain for an outburst of the joy of its vitality.

This was the wandering harp of Orpheus seeking the lost Eurydice, the song of the Ribhus, the tale-chanting of Gunâdhya, the lay of the sons of Kalew, and the harping of Wainamoinen.

The Esthonian description of the charm of this wood-music is very graphic, and may be set beside Ovid's account of the springing of the trees at the playing of Orpheus.

"In the dusky pine-tree forest
Sat the eldest son of Kalew,
Singing 'neath a branching fir.
As from swelling throat he chanted,
Danced the fir-cones on the branches;
Every leaflet was astir.
All the larches thrill'd, and budding,
Burst to tufts of silky green;
Waved the pine-tops in the sunset,

Steep'd in lustrous purple sheen.
Catkins dangled on the hazels,
On the oak the acorns sprouted,
And the black-thorn blossom'd white,
Sudden wreathed in snowy tresses,
Fragrant in the evening glory,
Scenting all the moonlit night."

Then the second son of Kalew goes to a birch-wood, and sings there. Then the corn begins to kern, the petals of the cherry to drop off, and the luscious fruit to swell and redden, the ripening apple to blush towards the sun, the cranberry and the whortle to speckle the moor with scarlet and purple.

Then the third son intones his lay in a forest of oaks, and the beasts assemble, the birds give voice, the lark sings shrill, the cuckoo calls, the doves coo, and the magpies chatter, the swans utter their trumpet-note, the sparrows twitter, and then as they weary, with sweet flute-like note sad Philomel begins his strain (Kalewpoeg. Rune iii.).

In the Finn mythology, these results follow the playing of Wainamoinen's magic harp. The story of this instrument is singular enough.

Wainamoinen went to a waterfall, and killed a pike which swam below it. Of the bones of this fish he constructed a harp, just as Hermes made

his lyre of the tortoise-shell. But he dropped this instrument into the sea, and thus it fell into the power of the sea-gods, which accounts for the music of the ocean on the beach. The hero then made another from the forest wood, and with it descended to Pohjola, the realm of darkness, in quest of the mystic Sampo; just as in the classic myth Orpheus went down to Hades, to bring thence Eurydice. When in the realm of gloom perpetual, the Finn demi-god struck his kantele, and sent all the inhabitants of Pohjola to sleep; as Hermes, when about to steal Io, made the eyes of Argus close at the sound of his lyre. Then he ran off with the Sampo, and had nearly got it to the land of light, when the dwellers in Pohjola awoke, and pursued and fought him for the ravished treasure, which, in the struggle, fell into the sea and was lost; again reminding us of the classic tale of Orpheus.

The effects of the harping of Wainamoinen remind one of those accompanying the playing of the Greek lyrist.

"The ancient Wainamoinen began to sing; he raised his clear and limpid voice, and his light fingers danced over the strings of the kantele, whilst joy answered to joy, and song to song. Every

beast of the forest and fowl of the air came about him, to listen to the sweet voice, and to taste the music of his strains. The wolf deserted the swamp, the bear forsook his forest lair ; they ascended the hedge, and the hedge gave way. Then they climbed the pine, and sat on the boughs, hearkening whilst Wainamoinen intoned his joy. The old black-bearded monarch of the forest, and all the host of Tapio, hastened to listen. His wife, the brave lady of Tapiola, put on her socks of blue, and her laces of red, and ascended a hollow trunk to listen to the god. The eagles came down from the cloud, the falcon dropped through the air, the mew flitted from the shore, the swan forsook the limpid waves, the swift lark, the light swallow, the graceful finches perched on the shoulders of the god. The fair virgins of the air, the rich and gorgeous sun, the gentle beaming moon, halted, the one on the luminous vault of heaven, the other leaning on the edge of a cloud. There they wove with the golden shuttle and the silver comb. They heard the unknown voice, the sweet song of the hero. And the silver comb fell, the golden shuttle dropped, and the threads of their tissue were broken. Then came the salmon and the trout, the pike and the porpoise, fish great and small, towards the shore, listening to

the sweet strains of the charmer" (Kalewala, Rune xxii.).

In one of the heroic ballads of the Minussinchen Tartars, the wind, which is represented as a foal which courses round the world, finds that its master's two children, Aidôlei Mirgän and Alten Kuruptju, which I take to be the morning and evening stars, are dead and buried and watched by seven warriors. The foal changes himself into a maiden, and comes singing to the tomb such bewitching strains that

> "All the creatures of the forest,
> All the wing'd fowl of the air,
> Come and breathless to her listen;"

and the watchers are charmed into letting her steal away the children, as Hermes stole Io from Argus, and she revives them with the water of life, which is the dew [5].

In Scandinavian mythology, Odin was famous for his Rune chanting; and the power of bewitching creation with these Runes obtained for him the name of Galdner, from gala, to sing, a root retained in our nightingale, the night-songster; in gale, a name applied to the wind from its singing powers;

[5] Heldensagen der Minussischen Tataren, v. A. Schiefner. S. Petersburg, 1859, p. 60.

and in the Latin *gallus,* the noisy chanticleer of the farmyard.

A trace of the myth appears in the ancient German heroic Gudrunlied, where the powers are ascribed to Horant, *Norse* Hjarrandi, who is described as singing a song which no one could learn. "These strains he sang, and they were wondrous. To none were they too long, who heard the strains. The time it would take one to ride a thousand miles passed, whilst listening to him, as a moment. The wild beast of the forest and the timid deer hearkened, the little worms crept forth in the green meadows, fishes swam up to listen, each forgetting its nature, so long as he chanted his song." On reading this, we are reminded of that sweet German legend, so gracefully rendered by Longfellow, wherein the parts are changed, and it is no more the birds listening to the song of man, but proud man, with finger on lip and bated breath, listening to the matchless warble of the bird.

"A thousand years in Thy sight are but as yesterday!" mused Brother Felix; "how may that be?" and full of doubt over God's word he went forth to meditate in the forest.

> "And lo! he heard
> The sudden singing of a bird,

A snow-white bird, that from a cloud
Dropp'd down,
And among the branches brown
Sat singing
So sweet, and clear, and loud,
It seem'd a thousand harp-strings ringing.
And the Monk Felix closed his book,
And long, long
With rapturous look
He listen'd to the song,
And hardly breathed or stirr'd."

As he thus listened years rolled by, and on his return to the convent he found all changed—new faces in the refectory and in the choir.

Then the monastery roll was brought forth, wherein were written the names of all who had belonged to that house of prayer, and therein it was found—

"That on a certain day and date,
One thousand years before,
Had gone forth from the convent gate
The Monk Felix, and never more
Had enter'd that sacred door:
He had been counted among the dead.
And they knew at last,
That, such had been the power
Of that celestial and immortal song,
A thousand years had pass'd,
And had not seem'd so long
As a single hour."

Bishop Hatto

OF the many who yearly visit the Rhine, and bring away with them reminiscences of tottering castles and desecrated convents, whether they take interest or not in the legends inseparably attached to these ruins, none, probably, have failed to learn and remember the famous story of God's judgment on the wicked Bishop Hatto, in the quaint Mäusethurm, erected on a little rock in midstream.

At the close of the tenth century lived Hatto, once abbot of Fulda, where he ruled the monks with great prudence for twelve years, and afterwards Bishop of Mayence.

In the year 970, Germany suffered from famine.

> " The summer and autumn had been so wet,
> That in winter the corn was growing yet.
> 'Twas a piteous sight to see all around
> The corn lie rotting on the ground.

" Every day the starving poor
Crowded around Bishop Hatto's door,
For he had a plentiful last year's store;
And all the neighbourhood could tell
His granaries were furnish'd well."

Wearied by the cries of the famishing people, the Bishop appointed a day, whereon he undertook to quiet them. He bade all who were without bread, and the means to purchase it at its then high rate, repair to his great barn. From all quarters, far and near, the poor hungry folk flocked into Kaub, and were admitted into the barn, till it was as full of people as it could be made to contain.

" Then, when he saw it could hold no more,
Bishop Hatto he made fast the door,
And while for mercy on Christ they call,
He set fire to the barn, and burnt them all.

" 'I'faith, 'tis an excellent bonfire!' quoth he,
'And the country is greatly obliged to me
For ridding it, in these times forlorn,
Of rats that only consume the corn.'

" So then to his palace returned he,
And he sat down to supper merrily,
And he slept that night like an innocent man;
But Bishop Hatto never slept again.

" In the morning, as he enter'd the hall
Where his picture hung against the wall,
A sweat, like death, all over him came,
For the rats had eaten it out of the frame."

Then there came a man to him from his farm,

with a countenance pale with fear, to tell him that the rats had devoured all the corn in his granaries. And presently there came another servant, to inform him that a legion of rats was on its way to his palace. The Bishop looked from his window, and saw the road and fields dark with the moving multitude; neither hedge nor wall impeded their progress, as they made straight for his mansion. Then, full of terror, the prelate fled by his postern, and, taking a boat, was rowed out to his tower in the river,

"——— and bárr'd
All the gates secure and hard.

"He laid him down, and closed his eyes;
But soon a scream made him arise.
He started, and saw two eyes of flame
On his pillow, from whence the screaming came.

"He listen'd and look'd—it was only the cat;
But the Bishop he grew more fearful for that,
For she sat screaming, mad with fear,
At the army of rats that were drawing near.

"For they have swum over the river so deep,
And they have climb'd the shores so steep,
And now by thousands up they crawl
To the holes and windows in the wall.

"Down on his knees the Bishop fell,
And faster and faster his beads did tell,
As ouder and louder, drawing near,
The saw of their teeth without he could hear.

"And in at the windows, and in at the door,
And through the walls by thousands they pour,
And down from the ceiling, and up through the floor,
From the right and the left, from behind and before,
From within and without, from above and below,
And all at once to the Bishop they go.

"They have whetted their teeth against the stones,
And now they pick the Bishop's bones;
They gnaw'd the flesh from every limb,
For they were sent to do judgment on him."

It is satisfactory to know that popular fiction has maligned poor Bishop Hatto, who was not by any means a hard-hearted and wicked prelate. Wolfius [1], who tells the story on the authority of Honorius Augustodunensis (d. 1152), Marianus Scotus (d. 1086), and Grithemius (d. 1516), accompanying it with the curious picture reproduced as frontispiece to this volume, says, "This is regarded by many as a fable, yet the tower, taking its name from the mice, exists to this day in the river Rhine." But this is no evidence, as there is documentary proof that the tower was erected as a station for collecting tolls on the vessels which passed up and down the river.

The same story is told of other persons and places. Indeed, Wolfius reproduces his picture of

[1] Wolfii Lect. Memorab. Centenarii xvi. Lavingæ, 1600, tom. i. p. 343.

Hatto in the mouse-tower, to do service as an illustration of the dreadful death of Widerolf, Bishop of Strasburg (997), who, in the seventeenth year of his episcopate, on July 17th, in punishment for having suppressed the convent of Seltzen on the Rhine, was attacked and devoured by mice or rats[2]. The same fate is also attributed to Bishop Adolf of Cologne, who died in 1112[3].

The story comes to us from Switzerland. A Freiherr von Güttingen possessed three castles between Constance and Arbon, in the Canton of Thurgau, namely, Güttingen, Moosburg, and Oberburg. During a famine, he collected the poor of his territory into a great barn, and there consumed them, mocking their cries by exclamations of "Hark! how the rats and mice are squeaking." Shortly after, he was attacked by an army of mice, and fled to his castle of Güttingen in the waters of the Lake of Constance; but the vermin pursued him to his retreat, and devoured him. The castle then sank into the lake, and its ruins are distin-

[2] Id. tom. i. p. 270. See also Königshofen's Chronik. Königshofen was priest of Strasbourg (b. 1360, d. 1420). His German Chronicle contains the story of Bishop Widerolf and the mice.

[3] San-Marte, Germania, viii. 77.

guishable when the water is clear and unruffled[4]. In Austria, a similar legend is related of the mouse-tower at Holzölster, with this difference only, that the hard-hearted nobleman casts the poor people into a dungeon and starves them to death, instead of burning them[5].

Between Inning and Seefeld in Bavaria is the Wörthsee, called also the Mouse-lake. There was once a Count of Seefeld, who in time of famine put all his starving poor in a dungeon, jested at their cries, which he called the squeaking of mice, and was devoured by these animals in his tower in the lake, to which he fled from them, although he suspended his bed by iron chains from the roof[6].

A similar story is told of the Mäuseschloss in the Hirschberger lake. A Polish version occurs in old historical writers.

Martinus Gallus, who wrote in 1110, says that King Popiel, having been driven from his kingdom, was so tormented by mice, that he fled to an island whereon was a wooden tower, in which he took refuge; but the host of mice and rats swam over and ate him up. The story is told more fully by

[4] Zeitschrift f. Deut. Myth. iii. p. 307.
[5] Vernaleken, Alpensagen, p. 328.
[6] Zeitschrift f. Deut. Myth. i. p. 452.

Majolus[7]. When the Poles murmured at the bad government of the king, and sought redress, Popiel summoned the chief murmurers to his palace, where he pretended that he was ill, and then poisoned them. After this the corpses were flung by his orders into the lake Gopolo. Then the king held a banquet of rejoicing at having freed himself from these troublesome complainers. But during the feast, by a strange metamorphosis (*mira quadam metamorphosi*), an enormous number of mice issued from the bodies of his poisoned subjects, and rushing on the palace, attacked the king and his family. Popiel took refuge within a circle of fire, but the mice broke through the flaming ring; then he fled with his wife and child to a castle in the sea, but was followed by the animals and devoured.

A Scandinavian legend is to this effect[8]. King Knut the Saint was murdered by the Earl Asbjorn, in the church of S. Alban, in Odense, during an insurrection of the Jutes, in 1086. Next year the country suffered severely from famine, and this was attributed to Divine vengeance for the murder of the king. Asbjorn was fallen upon by rats, and eaten up.

[7] Majolus, Dierum Canic. p. 793.
[8] Afzelius, Sagohäfder (2nd ed.), ii. p. 132.

William of Malmesbury tells this story[9]: "I have heard a person of the utmost veracity relate, that one of the adversaries of Henry IV. (of Germany), a weak and factious man, while reclining at a banquet, was on a sudden so completely surrounded by mice as to be unable to escape. So great was the number of these little animals, that there could scarcely be imagined more in a whole province. It was in vain that they were attacked with clubs and fragments of the benches which were at hand; and though they were for a long time assailed by all, yet they wreaked their deputed curse on no one else; pursuing him only with their teeth, and with a kind of dreadful squeaking. And although he was carried out to sea about a javelin's cast by the servants, yet he could not by these means escape their violence; for immediately so great a multitude of mice took to the water, that you would have sworn the sea was strewed with chaff. But when they began to gnaw the planks of the ship, and the water, rushing through the chinks, threatened inevitable shipwreck, the servants turned the vessel to the shore. The animals, then also swimming close to the ship, landed first.

[9] William of Malmesbury, book iii., Bohn's trans., p. 313.

Thus the wretch, set on shore, and soon after entirely gnawed in pieces, satiated the dreadful hunger of the mice.

"I deem this the less wonderful, because it is well known that in Asia, if a leopard bite any person, a party of mice approach directly. . . . . But if, by the care of servants driving them off, the destruction can be avoided during nine days, then medical assistance, if called in, may be of service. My informant had seen a person wounded after this manner, who, despairing of safety on shore, proceeded to sea, and lay at anchor; when, immediately, more than a thousand mice swam out, wonderful to relate, in the rinds of pomegranates, the insides of which they had eaten; but they were drowned through the loud shouting of the sailors."

Albertus Trium-Fontium tells the same story under the year 1083, quoting probably from William of Malmesbury.

Giraldus Cambrensis (d. 1220), in his "Itinerary," relates a curious story of a youth named Siscillus Esceir-hir, or Long-shanks, who was attacked in his bed by multitudes of toads, and who fled from them to the top of a tree, but was pursued by the reptiles, and his flesh picked from his bones. "And in like

manner," he adds, "we read of how by the secret, but never unjust, counsel of God a certain man was persecuted by the larger sort of mice which are commonly called *rati*[1]."

And Thietmar of Merseburg (b. 976, d. 1018) says, that there was once a certain knight who, having appropriated the goods of S. Clement, and refused to make restitution, was one day attacked by an innumerable host of mice, as he lay in bed. At first he defended himself with a club, then with his sword, and, as he found himself unable to cope with the multitude, he ordered his servants to put him in a box, and suspend this by a rope from the ceiling, and as soon as the mice were gone, to liberate him. But the animals pursued him even thus, and when he was taken down, it was found that they had eaten the flesh and skin off his bones. And it became manifest to all how obnoxious to God is the sin of sacrilege[2].

Cæsarius of Heisterbach (Dist. ii. c. 31) tells a tale of a usurer in Cologne, who, moved with compunction for his sins, confessed to a priest, who bade him fill a chest with bread, as alms for

[1] Girald. Cambr. Itin. Cambriæ, lib. xi. c. 2.

[2] Thietmar, Ep. Merseburg. Chronici libri viii., lib. vi. c. 30.

the poor attached to the church of S. Gereon. Next morning the loaves were found transformed into toads and frogs. "Behold," said the priest, "the value of your alms in the sight of God!" To which the terrified usurer replied, "Lord, what shall I do?" And the priest answered, "If you wish to be saved, lie this night naked amidst these reptiles." Wondrous contrition. He, though he recoiled from such a couch, preferred to lie among worms which perish, rather than those which are eternal; and he cast himself nude upon the creatures. Then the priest went to the box, shut it, and departed; which, when he opened it on the following day, he found to contain nothing save human bones.

It will be seen from these versions of the Hatto myth, how prevalent among the Northern nations was the idea of men being devoured by vermin. The manner of accounting for their death differs, but all the stories agree in regarding that death as mysterious.

I believe the origin of these stories to be a heathen human sacrifice made in times of famine. That such sacrifice took place among the Scandinavian and Teutonic peoples is certain. Tacitus tells us that the Germans sacrificed men. Snorro

Sturlesson (d. 1241) gives us an instance of the Swedes offering their king to obtain abundant crops [3].

"Donald took the heritage after his father Visbur, and ruled over the land. As in his time there was a great famine and distress, the Swedes made great offerings of sacrifice at Upsala. The first autumn they sacrificed oxen, but the succeeding season was not improved by it. The following autumn they sacrificed men, but the succeeding year was rather worse. The third autumn, when the offer of sacrifices should begin, a great multitude of Swedes came to Upsala; and now the chiefs held consultations with each other, and all agreed that the times of scarcity were on account of their king Donald, and they resolved to offer him for good seasons, and to assault and kill him, and sprinkle the altar of the gods with his blood. And they did so." So again with Olaf the Tree-feller: "There came dear times and famine, which they ascribed to their king, as the Swedes used always to reckon good or bad crops for or against their kings. The Swedes took it amiss that Olaf was sparing in his sacrifices, and believed the dear times

[3] Snorro Sturlesson, Heimskringla, Saga i. c. 18, 47.

must proceed from this cause. The Swedes therefore gathered together troops, made an expedition against King Olaf, surrounded his house, and burnt him in it, giving him to Odin as a sacrifice for good crops."

Saxo Grammaticus says that in the reign of King Snio of Denmark there was a famine. The "Chronicon Regum Danicorum" tells a curious story about this Snio being devoured by vermin, sent to destroy him by his former master the giant Lae. Probably Snio was sacrificed, like Donald and Olaf, to obtain good harvests.

The manner in which human sacrifices were made was very different. Sometimes the victims were precipitated off a rock, sometimes hung, at other times they were sunk in a bog. It seems probable to me that the manner in which an offering was made for plenty, was by exposure to rats, just as M. Du Chaillu tells us, an African tribe place their criminals in the way of ants to be devoured by them. The peculiar death of Ragnar Lodbrog, who was sentenced by Ella of Northumberland to be stung to death by serpents in a dungeon, was somewhat similar. Offerings to rats and mice are still prevalent among the peasantry in certain parts of Germany, if we may credit

Grimm and Wolf; and this can only be a relic of heathenism, for the significance of the act is lost.

In Mark it is said that the Elves appear in Yuletide as mice, and cakes are laid out for them. In Bohemia, on Christmas eve, the remainder of the supper is given them with the words, "Mice! eat of these crumbs, and leave the wheat."

If I am correct in supposing that the Hatto myth points to sacrifices of chieftains and princes in times of famine, and that the manner of offering the sacrifice was the exposure of the victim to rats, then it is not to be wondered at, that, when the reason of such a sacrifice was forgotten, the death should be accounted as a judgment of God for some crime committed by the sufferer, as hard-heartedness, murder, or sacrilege. Both Giraldus Cambrensis and William of Malmesbury are, however, sadly troubled to find a cause.

Rats and mice have generally been considered sacred animals. Among the Scandinavian and Teutonic peoples they were regarded as the souls of the dead.

In the article on the Piper of Hameln, I mentioned that Prætorius gives a story of a woman's soul leaving her body in the shape of a red mouse.

According to Bohemian belief, one must not go to sleep thirsty, or the soul will leave the body in search of drink. Three labourers once lost their way in a wood. Parched with thirst, they sought, but in vain, for a spring of water. At last one of them lay down and fell asleep, but the others continuing their search, discovered a fountain. They drank, and then returned to their comrade. He still slept, and they observed a little white mouse run out of his mouth, go to the spring, drink, and return to his mouth. They woke him and said, "You are such an idle fellow, that instead of going yourself after water, you send your soul. We will have nothing more to do with you."

A miller in the Black Forest, after having cut wood, lay down and slept. A servant saw a mouse run out of him. He and his companions went in pursuit. They scared the little creature away, little thinking it was the soul of the miller, and they were never able to rouse him again. Paulus Diaconus relates of King Gunthram that his soul left his body in the shape of a serpent; and Hugh Miller, in his "Schools and Schoolmasters," tells a Scottish story of two companions, one of whom slept whilst the other watched. He who was awake saw a bee come out of the mouth of the sleeper, cross

a stream of water on a straw, run into a hole, and then return and disappear into the mouth of his friend. These are similar stories, but the bee and the serpent have taken the place of the mouse. The idea that the soul is like a mouse, lies at the root of several grotesque stories, as that told by Luther, in his "Table-Talk," of a woman giving birth to a rat, and that of a mother harassed by the clamour of her children, wishing they were mice, and finding this inconsiderate wish literally fulfilled.

The same idea has passed into Christian iconography. According to the popular German belief, the souls of the dead spend the first night after they leave the body with S. Gertrude, the second with S. Michael, and the third in their destined habitation. S. Gertrude is regarded as the patroness of fleeting souls, the saint who is the first to shelter the spirits when they begin their wandering. As the patroness of souls, her symbol is a mouse. Various stories have been invented to account for this symbol. Some relate that a maiden span on her festival, and the mice ate through her clew as a punishment. A prettier story is that, when she prayed, she was so absorbed that the mice ran about her, and up her pastoral staff, without attracting her attention. Another

explanation is that the mouse is a symbol of the evil spirit, which S. Gertrude overcame [4].

But S. Gertrude occupies the place of the ancient Teutonic goddess Holda or Perchta, who was the receiver of the souls of maidens and children, and who still exists as the White Lady, not unfrequently, in German legends, transforming herself, or those whom she decoys into her home, into white mice.

It is not unlikely that the saying, "Rats desert a falling house," applied originally to the crumbling ruin of the body from which the soul fled.

In the Hatto and Popiel legends it is evident that the rats are the souls of those whom the Bishop and the King murdered.

The rats of Bingen issue from the flames in which the poor people are being consumed. The same is said of the rats which devoured the Freiherr of Güttingen. The rats *mira metamorphosi* come from the corpses of those poisoned by Popiel.

There is a curious Icelandic story, written in the twelfth century, which bears a striking resemblance to those of Hatto, Widerolf, &c., but in which the rats make no appearance.

[4] Die Attribute der Heiligen. Hanover, 1843, p. 114.

In the tenth century Iceland suffered severely from a bad year, so that there was a large amount of destitution throughout the country; and, unless something were done by the wealthy bonders to relieve it, there was a certainty of many poor householders perishing during the approaching winter. Then Svathi, a heathen chief, stepped forward and undertook to provide for a considerable number of sufferers. Accordingly, the poor starving wretches assembled at his door, and were ordered by him to dig a large pit in his tun, or home meadow. They complied with alacrity, and in the evening they were gathered into a barn, the door was locked upon them, and it was explained to them that on the following morning they were to be buried alive in the pit of their own digging.

"You will at once perceive," said Svathi, "that if a number of you be put out of your misery, the number of mouths wanting food will be reduced, and there will be more victuals for those who remain."

There was truth in what Svathi said; but the poor wretches did not view the matter in the same light as he, nor appreciate the force of his argument; and they spent the night howling with despair. Thorwald of Asi, a Christian, who happened

to be riding by towards dawn, heard the outcries, and went to the barn to inquire into their signification. When he learned the cause of their distress, he liberated the prisoners, and bade them follow him to Asi. Before long, Svathi became aware that his victims had escaped, and set off in pursuit. However, he was unable to recover them, as Thorwald's men were armed, and the poor people were prepared to resist with the courage of despair. Thus the golden opportunity was lost, and he was obliged to return home, bewailing the failure of his scheme. As he dashed up to his house, blinded with rage, and regardless of what was before him, the horse fell with him into the pit which the poor folk had dug, and he was killed by the fall. He was buried in it next day, along with his horse and hound [5].

In all likelihood this Svathi was sacrificed in time of famine, and the legend may describe correctly the manner in which he was offered to the gods, viz., by burial alive.

In this story, as in Snorro's account of Donald, we have a sacrifice of human beings, taken from a low rank, offered first, and then the chief himself sacrificed.

[5] Younger Olaf's Saga Trygvas., cap. 225.

The god to whom these human oblations were made, seems to have been Odin. In the "Herverar Saga" is an account of a famine in Jutland, to obtain relief from which, the nobles and farmers consulted whom to sacrifice, and they decided that the king's son was the most illustrious person they could present to Odin. But the king, to save his son, fought with another king, and slew him and his son, and with their blood smeared the altar of Odin, and thus appeased the god [6].

Now, Odin was the receiver of the souls of men, as Freya, or the German Holda, took charge of those of women. Odin appears as the wild huntsman, followed by a multitude of souls; or, as the Piper of Hameln, leading them into the mountain where he dwells.

Freya, or Holda, leads an army of mice, and Odin a multitude of rats.

As a rat or soul god, it is not unlikely that sacrifices to him may have been made by the placing of the victim on an island infested by water-rats, there to be devoured. The manner in which sacrifices were made have generally some relation to the nature of the god to whom they were made.

[6] Herverar Saga, cap. xi.

Thus, as Odin was a wind-god, men were hung in his honour. Most of the legends we are considering point to islands as the place where the victim suffered, and islands, we know, were regarded with special sanctity by the Northern nations. Rügen and Heligoland in the sea were sacred from a remote antiquity, and probably lakes had as well their sacred islets, to which the victim was rowed out, his back broken, and on which he was left to become the prey of the rats.

We find rats and mice regarded as sacred animals in other Aryan mythologies. Thus the mouse was the beast of the Indian Rudra.

"This portion belongs to thee, O Rudra, with thy sister Ambika," is the wording of a prayer in the Yajur-Veda; "may it please you. This portion belongs to thee, O Rudra, whose animal is the mouse[7]." In later mythology it became the attribute of Ganeça, who was represented as riding upon a rat; but Ganeça is simply an hypostasis for Rudra.

Apollo was called Smintheus, as has been stated already. On some of the coins of Argos, in place of the god, is figured his symbol, the mouse[8]. In the temple at Chrisa was a statue of

[7] Yajur-Veda, iii. 57.
[8] Otfr. Müller, Dorier, i. p. 285.

Apollo, with a mouse at his feet [9]; and tame mice were kept as sacred to the god. In the Smintheion of Hamaxitus, white mice were fed as a solemn rite, and had their holes under the altar; and near the tripod of Apollo was a representation of one of these animals [1].

Among Semitic nations the mouse was also sacred.

Herodotus gives a curious legend relating to the destruction of the host of Sennacherib before Jerusalem. Isaiah simply says, "Then the angel of the Lord went forth, and smote in the camp of the Assyrians a hundred and fourscore and five thousand: and when they arose early in the morning, behold, they were all dead corpses [2]." How they were slain he does not specify, but as the army was threatened with a "hot blast," and a "destroying wind," it is rendered probable that they were destroyed by a hot wind. But the story of Herodotus is very different. He received it from the Egyptian priests, who claimed the miracle, of which they had but an imperfect knowledge, for one of their gods, and transferred the entire event to their

[9] Strabo, xiii. 1.

[1] Ælian, Hist. Animal. xii. 15.

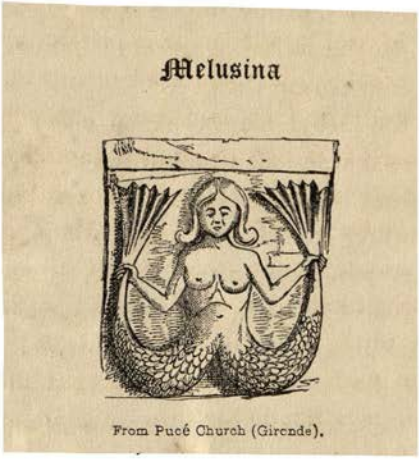
[2] Isa. xxxvii. 36.

own country. "After Amyrtæus reigned the priest of Vulcan, whose name was Sethon; he held in no account and despised the military caste of the Egyptians, as not having need of their services; and accordingly, among other indignities, he took away their lands; to each of whom, under former kings, twelve chosen acres had been assigned. After this, Sennacherib, king of the Arabians and Assyrians, marched a large army against Egypt; whereupon the Egyptian warriors refused to assist him; and the priest being reduced to a strait, entered the temple, and bewailed before the image the calamities he was in danger of suffering. While he was lamenting, sleep fell upon him; and it appeared to him in a vision that the god stood by and encouraged him, assuring him that he should suffer nothing disagreeable in meeting the Arabian army, for he would himself send assistants to him. Confiding in this vision, he took with him such of the Egyptians as were willing to follow him, and encamped in Pelusium, for there the entrance into Egypt is; but none of the military caste followed him, but tradesmen, mechanics, and sutlers. When they arrived there, a number of field-mice, pouring in upon their enemies, devoured their quivers and their bows, and, moreover, the handles of their

shields; so that on the next day, when they fled bereft of their arms, many of them fell. And to this day, a stone statue of this king stands in the temple of Vulcan, with a mouse in his hand, and an inscription to the following effect: 'Whoever looks on me, let him revere the gods[3].'"

Among the Babylonians the mouse was sacrificed and eaten as a religious rite, but in connexion with what god does not transpire[4]. And the Philistines, who, according to Hitzig, were a Pelasgic and therefore Aryan race, after having suffered from the retention of the ark, were told by their divines to "make images of your mice that mar the land; and ye shall give glory unto the God of Israel." Therefore they made five golden mice as an offering to the Lord[5]. This indicates the mouse as having been the symbol among the Philistines of a deity whom they identified with the God of Israel.

[3] Herod. Euterpe, c. 141, Trans. Bohn.
[4] Movers, Phönizier, i. p. 219. Cf. Isa. lxvi. 17.
[5] 1 Sam. vi. 4, 5.



From Pucé Church (Gironde).

EMMERICK, Count of Poitou, was a nobleman of great wealth, and eminent for his virtues. He had two children, a son named Bertram, and a daughter Blaniferte. In the great forest which stretched away in all directions around the knoll on which stood the town and castle of Poictiers, lived a Count de la Forêt, related to Emmerick, but poor and with a large family. Out of compassion for his kinsman, the Count of Poitou adopted his youngest son Raymond, a beautiful

and amiable youth, and made him his constant companion in hall and in the chase. One day the Count and his retinue hunted a boar in the forest of Colombiers, and distancing his servants, Emmerick found himself alone in the depths of the wood with Raymond. The boar had escaped. Night came on, and the two huntsmen lost their way. They succeeded in lighting a fire, and were warming themselves over the blaze, when suddenly the boar plunged out of the forest upon the Count, and Raymond, snatching up his sword, struck at the beast, but the blade glanced off and slew the Count. A second blow laid the boar at his side. Raymond then with horror perceived that his friend and master was dead. In despair he mounted his horse and fled, not knowing whither he went.

Presently the boughs of the trees became less interlaced, and the trunks fewer; next moment his horse, crashing through the shrubs, brought him out on a pleasant glade, white with rime, and illumined by the new moon; in the midst bubbled up a limpid fountain, and flowed away over a pebbly floor with a soothing murmur. Near the fountain-head sat three maidens in glimmering white dresses, with long waving golden hair, and faces of inexpressible beauty.

Raymond was riveted to the spot with astonishment. He believed that he saw a vision of angels, and would have prostrated himself at their feet, had not one of them advanced and stayed him. The lady inquired the cause of his manifest terror, and the young man, after a slight hesitation, told her of his dreadful misfortune. She listened with attention, and at the conclusion of his story, recommended him to remount his horse, and gallop out of the forest, and return to Poictiers, as though unconscious of what had taken place. All the huntsmen had that day lost themselves in the wood, and were returning singly, at intervals, to the castle, so that no suspicion would attach to him. The body of the count would be found, and from the proximity of the dead boar, it would be concluded that he had fallen before the tusk of the animal, to which he had given its death-blow.

Relieved of his anxiety, Raymond was able to devote his attention exclusively to the beauty of the lady who addressed him, and found means to prolong the conversation till daybreak. He had never beheld charms equal to hers, and the susceptible heart of the youth was completely captivated by the fair unknown. Before he left her, he obtained from her a promise to be his. She then

told him to ask of his kinsman Bertram, as a gift, so much ground around the fountain where they had met, as could be covered by a stag's hide: upon this ground she undertook to erect a magnificent palace. Her name, she told him, was Melusina; she was a water-fay of great power and wealth. His she consented to be, but subject to one condition, that her Saturdays might be spent in a complete seclusion, upon which he should never venture to intrude.

Raymond then left her, and followed her advice to the letter. Bertram, who succeeded his father, readily granted the land he asked for, but was not a little vexed, when he found that, by cutting the hide into threads, Raymond had succeeded in making it include a considerable area.

Raymond then invited the young count to his wedding, and the marriage-festivities took place, with unusual splendour, in the magnificent castle erected by Melusina. On the evening of the marriage, the bride, with tears in her beautiful eyes, implored her husband on no account to attempt an intrusion on her privacy upon Saturdays, for such an intrusion must infallibly separate them for ever. The enamoured Raymond readily swore to strictly observe her wishes in this matter.

Melusina continued to extend the castle, and strengthen its fortifications, till the like was not to be seen in all the country round. On its completion she named it after herself Lusinia, a name which has been corrupted into Lusignan, which it bears to this day.

In course of time, the Lady of Lusignan gave birth to a son, who was baptized Urian. He was a strangely shaped child: his mouth was large, his ears pendulous; one of his eyes was red, the other green.

A twelvemonth later she gave birth to another son, whom she called Gedes; he had a face which was scarlet. In thank-offering for his birth she erected and endowed the convent of Malliers; and, as a place of residence for her child, built the strong castle of Favent.

Melusina then bore a third son, who was christened Gyot. He was a fine, handsome child, but one of his eyes was higher up in his face than the other. For him his mother built La Rochelle.

Her next son, Anthony, had long claws on his fingers, and was covered with hair; the next again had but a single eye. The sixth was Geoffry with the Tooth, so called from a boar's tusk which protruded from his jaw. Other children she had,

but all were in some way disfigured and monstrous.

Years passed, and the love of Raymond for his beautiful wife never languished. Every Saturday she left him, and spent the twenty-four hours in the strictest seclusion, without her husband thinking of intruding on her privacy. The children grew up to be great heroes and illustrious warriors. One, Freimund, entered the Church, and became a pious monk, in the abbey of Malliers. The aged Count de la Forêt and the brothers of Raymond shared in his good fortune, and the old man spent his last years in the castle with his son, whilst the brothers were furnished with money and servants suitable to their rank.

One Saturday, the old father inquired at dinner after his daughter-in-law. Raymond replied that she was not visible on Saturdays. Thereupon one of his brothers, drawing him aside, whispered that strange gossiping tales were about relative to this sabbath seclusion, and that it behoved him to inquire into it, and set the minds of people at rest. Full of wrath and anxiety, the count rushed off to the private apartments of the countess, but found them empty. One door alone was locked, and that opened into a bath. He looked through the key-

hole, and to his dismay beheld her in the water, her lower extremities changed into the tail of a monstrous fish or serpent.

Silently he withdrew. No word of what he had seen passed his lips; it was not loathing that filled his heart, but anguish at the thought that by his fault he must lose the beautiful wife who had been the charm and glory of his life. Some time passed by, however, and Melusina gave no token of consciousness that she had been observed during the period of her transformation. But one day news reached the castle that Geoffry with the Tooth had attacked the monastery of Malliers, and burned it; and that in the flames had perished Freimund, with the abbot and a hundred monks. On hearing of this disaster, the poor father, in a paroxysm of misery, exclaimed, as Melusina approached to comfort him, "Away, odious serpent, contaminator of my honourable race!"

At these words she fainted; and Raymond, full of sorrow for having spoken thus intemperately, strove to revive her. When she came to herself again, with streaming tears she kissed and embraced him for the last time. "O husband!" she said, "I leave two little ones in their cradle; look tenderly after them, bereaved of their mother. And now

farewell for ever! yet know that thou, and those who succeed thee, shall see me hover over this fair castle of Lusignan, whenever a new lord is to come." And with a long wail of agony she swept from the window, leaving the impression of her foot on the stone she last touched.

The children in arms she had left were Dietrich and Raymond. At night, the nurses beheld a glimmering figure appear near the cradle of the babes, most like the vanished countess, but from her waist downwards terminating in a scaly fish-tail enamelled blue and white. At her approach the little ones extended their arms and smiled, and she took them to her breast and suckled them; but as the grey dawn stole in at the casement, she vanished, and the children's cries told the nurses that their mother was gone.

Long was it believed in France that the unfortunate Melusina appeared in the air, wailing over the ramparts of Lusignan before the death of one of its lords; and that, on the extinction of the family, she was seen whenever a king of France was to depart this life. Mézeray informs us that he was assured of the truth of the appearance of Melusina on the old tower of Lusignan, previous to the death of one of her descendants, or of a king of France, by

people of reputation, and who were not by any means credulous. She appeared in a mourning dress, and continued for a long time to utter the most heart-rending lamentations.

Brantome, in his eulogium on the Duke of Montpensier, who in 1574 destroyed Lusignan, a Huguenot retreat, says:

"I heard, more than forty years ago, an old veteran say, that when the Emperor Charles V. came to France, they brought him by Lusignan for the sake of the recreation of hunting the deer, which were then in great abundance in the fine old parks of France; that he was never tired of admiring and praising the beauty, the size, and the chef d'œuvre of that house, built, which is more, by such a lady, of whom he made them tell him several fabulous tales, which are there quite common, even to the good old women who washed their linen at the fountains, whom Queen Catherine de Medicis, mother of the king, would also question and listen to. Some told her that they used sometimes to see her come to the fountain, to bathe in it, in the form of a most beautiful woman and in the dress of a widow. Others said that they used to see her, but very rarely, and that on Saturday evening (for in that state she did not let herself be

seen), bathing, half her body being that of a very beautiful lady, the other half ending in a snake; others, that she used to appear a-top of the great tower in a very beautiful form, and as a snake. Some said, that when any great disaster was to come on the kingdom, or a change of reign, or a death, or misfortune among her relatives, who were the greatest people of France, and were kings, that three days before she was heard to cry, with a cry most shrill and terrible, three times.

"This is held to be perfectly true. Several persons of that place, who have heard it, are positive of it, and hand it from father to son; and say that, even when the siege came on, many soldiers and men of honour, who were there, affirmed it. But it was when order was given to throw down and destroy her castles, that she uttered her loudest cries and wails. Since then she has not been heard. Some old wives, however, say she has appeared to them, but very rarely [1]."

In 1387, Jean d'Arras, secretary to the Duke of Berry, received orders from his master to collect all information attainable with reference to Melusina, probably for the entertainment of the sister of the

[1] Keightley's Fairy Mythology, 1860, pp. 483, 484.

duke, the Countess de Bar. This he did, making considerable use of a history of the mysterious lady, written "by one of the race of Lusinia, William de Portenach (qu. Partenope), in Italian." This history if it ever existed, has not come down to us; the work of Jean d'Arras is a complete romance. According to him, Helmas, king of Albania (Scotland, or, as the German popular versions have it, Nordland), married a fay named Pressina, whom he found singing beside a fountain. She became his, after having exacted from him an oath never to visit her during her lying-in. She gave birth to three little girls at once, Melusina, Melior, and Plantina. A son of Helmas by a former wife hurried to his father with the joyful news, and the king, oblivious of his promise, rushed to his wife and found her bathing her three children. Pressina, on seeing him, exclaimed against his forgetfulness, and, taking her babes in her arms, vanished. She brought up the daughters until they were fifteen, when she unfolded to them the story of their father's breach of promise, and Melusina, the youngest, determined on revenge. She, in concert with her sisters, caught King Helmas and chained him in the heart of a mountain called Avalon, or, in the German books, Brunbelois, in Northubelon, i.e. Northumberland. At this unfilial

act, the mother was so indignant, that she sentenced her daughter Melusina to spend the sabbath in a semi-fish form, till she should marry one who would never inquire into what became of her on that day. Jean d'Arras relates that Serville, who defended Lusignan for the English against the Duke de Berry, swore to that prince upon his faith and honour, "that three days before the surrender of the castle, there entered into his chamber, though the doors were shut, a large serpent, enamelled blue and white, which struck its tail several times against the foot of the bed whereon he was lying with his wife, who was not at all frightened at it, though he was very considerably so; and that when he seized his sword, the serpent changed all at once into a woman, and said to him: 'How, Serville, you, who have been in so many battles and sieges, are you afraid? Know that I am the mistress of this castle, which I erected, and that soon you will have to surrender it!' When she had ended these words, she resumed her serpent-shape, and glided away so swiftly that he could not perceive her."

Stephan, a Dominican, of the house of Lusignan, developed the work of Jean d'Arras, and made the story so famous, that the families of Luxembourg, Rohan, and Sassenaye altered their pedigrees so as

to be able to claim descent from the illustrious Melusina[2]; and the Emperor Henry VII. felt no little pride in being able to number the beautiful and mysterious lady among his ancestors. "It does not escape me," writes the chronicler Conrad Vecerius, in his life of that emperor, "to report what is related in a little work in the vernacular, concerning the acts of a woman, Melyssina, on one day of the week becoming a serpent from her middle downwards, whom they reckon among the ancestors of Henry VII. . . . . But, as authors relate, that in a certain island of the ocean, there are nine Sirens endowed with various arts, such, for instance, as changing themselves into any shape they like, it is no absurd conjecture to suppose that Melyssina came thence[3]."

The story became immensely popular in France, in Germany, and in Spain, and was printed and reprinted. The following are some of the principal early editions of it.

Jean d'Arras, "Le liure de Melusine en frācoys;" Geneva, 1478. The same, Lyons and Paris, without date; Lyons, 4to, 1500, and again 1544;

[2] Bullet, Dissertat. sur la Mythologie Française. Paris, 1771, pp. 1—32.

[3] Urstisius, Scriptores Germaniæ. Frankfort, 1670.

Troyes, 4to, no date. "L'histoire de Melusine fille du roy d'Albanie et de dame Pressine, revue et mise en meilleur langage que par cy devant;" Lyons, 1597. "Le roman de Melusine, princesse de Lusignan, avec l'histoire de Geoffry, surnommé à la Grand Dent," par Nodot; Paris, 1700. An outline of the story in the "Bibliothèque des Romans," 1775, T. II. A Spanish version, "Historia de la linda Melosyna;" Tolosa, 1489. "La hystoria de la linda Melosina;" Sevilla, 1526. A Dutch translation, "Een san sonderlingke schone ende wonderlike historie, die men warachtich kout te syne ende autentick sprekende van eenre vrouwen gheheeten Melusine;" Tantwerpen, 1500. A Bohemian version, probably translated from the German, "Kronyke Kratochwilne, o ctné a slech netné Panně Meluzijně;" Prag, 1760, 1764, 1805. A Danish version, made about 1579, "Melusine;" Copenhagen, 1667, 1702, 1729. One in Swedish, without date. The original of these three last was the "History of Melusina," by Thüring von Ringoltingen, published in 1456; Augsburg, 1474; Strasburg, 1478. "Melosine-Geschicht," illustrated with woodcuts; Heidelberg, 1491. "Die Historia von Melusina;" Strasburg, 1506. "Die Histori oder Geschicht von der edle und schönen Melusina;" Augsburg,

1547; Strasburg, 1577, 1624. "Wunderbare Geschichte von der edeln und schönen Melusina, welche eine Tochter des Königs Helmus und ein Meerwunder gewesen ist;" Nürnberg, without date; reprinted in Marbach's "Volksbücher." Leipzig, 1838.

In the fable of Melusina, there are several points deserving of consideration, as—the framework of the story, the half-serpent or fish-shape of Melusina, and her appearances as warnings of impending misfortune or death. The minor details, as, for instance, the trick with the hide, which is taken from the story of Dido, shall not detain us.

The framework of the myth is the story-radical corresponding with that of Lohengrin. The skeleton of the romance is this—

1. A man falls in love with a woman of supernatural race.

2. She consents to live with him, subject to one condition.

3. He breaks the condition and loses her.

4. He seeks her, and—*a.* recovers her; *β.* never recovers her.

In the story before us, the last item has dropped out, but it exists in many other stories which have sprung from the same root. The beautiful legend of Undine is but another version of the same

story. A young knight marries a water-sprite, and promises never to be false to her, and never to bring her near a river. He breaks his engagement, and loses her. Then she comes to him on the eve of his second marriage and kisses him to death. Fouqué's inimitable romance is founded on the story as told by Theophrastus Paracelsus in his "Treatise on Elemental Sprites;" but the bare bones of the myth related by the philosopher have been quickened into life and beauty by the heaven-drawn spark of poetry wherewith Fouqué has endowed them.

In the French tale, Melusina seeks union with a mortal solely that she may escape from her enchantment; but in the German more earnest tale, Undine desires to become a bride that she may obtain an immortal soul. The corresponding Danish story is told by Hans Christian Andersen. A little mermaid sees a prince as she floats on the surface of the sea, and saves him in her arms from drowning when the ship is wrecked. But from that hour her heart is filled with yearning love for the youth whose life she has preserved. She seeks earth of her own free will, leaving her native element, although the consequence is pain at every step she takes.

She becomes the constant attendant of the prince, till he marries a princess, when her heart breaks and she becomes a Light-Elf, with prospect of immortality.

Belonging to the same family is the pretty Indian tale of Urvaçî. Urvaçî was an "apsaras," or heavenly maiden; she loved Puravaras, a martial king, and became his wife, only, however, on condition that she should never behold him without his clothes. For some years they were together, till the heavenly companions of Urvaçî determined to secure her return to her proper sphere. They accordingly beguiled Puravaras into leaving his bed in the darkness of night, and then, with a lightning-flash, they disclosed him in his nudity to the wife, who was thereupon constrained to leave him. A somewhat similar story is told, in the Katha Sarit Sagara (Book iii. c. 18), of Vidûshaka, who loves and marries a beautiful Bhadrâ, but after a while she vanishes, leaving behind her a ring. The inconsolable husband wanders in search of her, and reaching the heavenly land, drops the ring in a goblet of water, which is taken to her. By this she recognizes him, and they are re-united.

The legend of Melusina, as it comes to us, is by

no means in its original condition. Jean d'Arras, or other romancers, have considerably altered the simple tale, so as to make it assume the proportions of a romance. All that story of the fay Pressina, and her marriage with King Helmas, is but another version of the same story as Melusina.

Helmas finds Pressina near a fountain, and asks her to be his; she consents on condition that he does not visit her during her lying-in; he breaks the condition and loses her. This is the same as Raymond discovering Melusina near a spring, and obtaining her hand subject to the condition that he will not visit her one day of the week. Like Helmas, he breaks his promise and loses his wife. That both Pressina and Melusina are water-sprites, or nymphs, is unquestionable; both haunt a fountain, and the transformation of the lady of Lusignan indicates her aquatic origin. As Grimm has observed[4], this is a Gallic, and therefore a Keltic myth, an opinion confirmed by the Banshee part played by the unfortunate nymph. For the Banshee superstition has no corresponding feature in Scandinavian, Teutonic, or Classic mythology, and belongs entirely to the Kelts. Among others

[4] Deutsche Mythologie, i. 405.

there are death portents, but not, that I am aware of, spirits of women attached to families, by their bitter cries at night announcing the approach of the king of terrors.

The Irish Banshee is thus described: "We saw the figure of a tall, thin woman with uncovered head, and long hair that floated round her shoulders, attired in something which seemed either a loose white cloak or a sheet thrown hastily about her, uttering piercing cries.

"The most remarkable instance (of the Banshee) occurs in the MS. memoirs of Lady Fanshawe, so exemplary for her conjugal affection. Her husband, Sir Richard, and she chanced, during their abode in Ireland, to visit a friend, the head of a sept, who resided in an ancient baronial castle surrounded with a moat. At midnight she was awakened by a ghastly and supernatural scream, and looking out of bed, beheld in the moonlight a female face and part of the form hovering at the window. The face was that of a young and rather handsome woman, but pale, and the hair, which was reddish, loose and dishevelled. The dress, which Lady Fanshawe's terror did not prevent her remarking accurately, was that of the ancient Irish. This apparition continued to exhibit itself

for some time, and then vanished, with two shrieks similar to that which had first excited Lady Fanshawe's attention. In the morning, with infinite terror, she communicated to her host what she had witnessed, and found him prepared, not only to credit, but to account for the apparition :—

"'A near relation of my family,' said he, 'expired last night in this castle. We disguised our certain expectations of the event from you, lest it should throw a cloud over the cheerful reception which was your due[5]. Now, before such an event happens in this family and castle, the female spectre whom ye have seen always is visible : she is believed to be the spirit of a woman of inferior rank, whom one of my ancestors degraded himself by marrying, and whom afterwards, to expiate the dishonour done to his family, he caused to be drowned in the castle moat.'"

A very remarkable story of the Banshee is given by Mr. Crofton Croker. The Rev. Charles Bunworth was rector of Buttevant, in the county Cork, about the middle of last century. He was famous for his performance on the national instrument, the

[5] Like Admetus in the Alcestis of Euripides. This story of Lady Fanshawe is from a note to "The Lady of the Lake."

Irish harp, and for his hospitable reception and entertainment of the poor harpers who travelled from house to house about the country; and in his granary were deposited fifteen harps, bequeathed to him by the last members of a race which has now ceased to exist.

The circumstances attending the death of Mr. Bunworth were remarkable; but, says Mr. Crofton Croker, there are still living credible witnesses who declare their authenticity, and who can be produced to attest most, if not all, of the following particulars. Shortly before his decease, a shepherd heard the Banshee keening and clapping her hands under a lightning-struck tree near the house. On the eve of his death the night was serene and moonlit, and nothing broke the stillness of the melancholy watch kept by the bedside of the sick man, who lay in the drawing-room, by his two daughters. The little party were suddenly roused by a sound at the window near the bed: a rose-tree grew outside the window, so closely as to touch the glass; this was forced aside with some noise, and a low moaning was heard, accompanied by clapping of hands, as if of some female in deep affliction. It seemed as if the sound proceeded from a person holding her mouth close to the window. The lady who

sat by the bedside of Mr. Bunworth went into the adjoining room, where sat some male relatives, and asked, in a tone of alarm, if they had heard the Banshee. Sceptical of supernatural appearances, two of them rose hastily, and went out to discover the cause of these sounds, which they also distinctly heard. They walked all round the house, examining every spot of ground, particularly near the window from whence the voice had proceeded; the bed of earth beneath, in which the rose-tree was planted, had been recently dug, and the print of a footstep—if the tree had been forced aside by mortal hand—would have inevitably remained; but they could perceive no such impression, and an unbroken stillness reigned without. Hoping to dispel the mystery, they continued their search anxiously along the road, from the straightness of which, and the lightness of the night, they were enabled to see some distance around them; but all was silent and deserted, and they returned surprised and disappointed. How much more then were they astonished at learning that, the whole time of their absence, those who remained within the house had heard the moaning and clapping of hands even louder and more distinct than before they had gone out; and

no sooner was the door of the room closed on them, than they again heard the same mournful sounds. Every succeeding hour the sick man became worse, and when the first glimpse of the morning appeared, Mr. Bunworth expired.

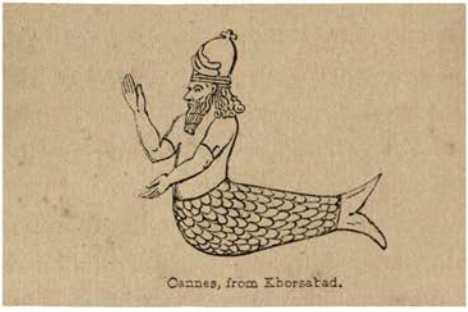
The Banshee is represented in Wales by the Gwrâch y Rhibyn, who is said to come after dusk, and flap her leathern wings against the window, giving warning of death, in a broken, howling tone, and calling on the one who is to quit mortality by his or her name several times. In Brittany, similar spirits are called Bandrhudes, and are attached to several of the ancient families. In other parts of France, they pass as Dames Blanches, who, however, are not to be confused with the Teutonic white ladies, which are spirits of a different order.

But, putting the Banshee part of the story of Melusina on one side, let us turn to the semi-fish or serpent form of Melusina. Jean d'Arras attributes this to a curse pronounced on her by the fay Pressina, but this is an invention of his own; the true conception of Melusina he did not grasp, and was therefore obliged to forge a legend which should account for her peculiar appearance. Melusina was a mermaid. Her presence beside the fountain, as

well as her fishy tail, indicate her nature; she was not, perhaps, a native of the sea, but a stream-dweller, and therefore as closely related to the true mermaid of the briny deep as are the fresh-water fish to those of the salt sea.

The superstitious belief in mermaids is universal, and I frankly confess my inability to account for its origin in every case. In some particular cases the origin of the myth is clear; in others it is not so. Let me take one which can be explained —the Oannes of the Chaldæans, the Philistine Dagon.

Oannes and Dag-on (the fish On) are identical. According to an ancient fable preserved by Berosus, a creature half man and half fish came out of "that part of the Erythræan sea which borders upon Babylonia," where he taught men the arts of life "to construct cities, to found temples, to compile laws, and, in short, instructed them in all things that tend to soften manners and humanize their lives;" and he adds that a representation of this animal Oannes was preserved in his day. A figure of him sporting in the waves, and apparently blessing a fleet of vessels, was discovered in a marine piece of sculpture, by M. Botta, in the excavations of Khorsabad.



Oannes, from Khorsabad.

At Nimroud, a gigantic image was found by Mr. Layard, representing him with the fish's head as a cap and the body of the fish depending over his shoulders, his legs those of a man, in his left hand holding a richly decorated bag, and his right hand upraised, as if in the act of presenting the mystic Assyrian fir-cone (British Museum, Nos. 29 and 30).

This Oannes is the Mizraimite On, and the Hebrew Aon, with a Greek case-termination, derived from a root signifying "to illumine." Aon was the original name of the god reverenced in the temple of Heliopolis, which in Scripture is called Beth-Aon, the house of On, as well as by its translation Beth-Shemesh, the house of the Sun. Not only does his name indicate his solar origin, but his representation with horned head-dress testifies to his nature. Ammon, Apis, Dionysos are sun-gods; Isis, Io,

Artemis are moon-goddesses, and are all horned. Indeed, in ancient iconography horns invariably connect the gods represented with the two great sources of light. Apparent exceptions, such as the Fauns, are not so in reality, when subjected to close scrutiny. Civilizing gods, who diffuse intelligence and instruct barbarians, are also solar deities, as the Egyptian Osiris, the Nabathæan Tammuz, the Greek Apollo, and the Mexican Quetzalcoatl; beside these Oannes takes his place, as the sun-god, giving knowledge and civilization. According to

A Babylonish seal in the British Museum, from Mueter's Babylonier.

the fable related by Berosus, he came on earth each morning, and at evening plunged into the sea; this is a mythical description of the rising and setting of the sun. His semi-piscine form was an expression of the idea that half his time was spent above ground, and half below the waves.

In precisely similar manner the Semitic moon-goddess, who followed the course of the sun, at times manifesting herself to the eyes of men, at others seeking concealment in the western flood, was represented as half woman, half fish, with characteristics which make her lunar origin indisputable. Her name was Derceto or Atergatis. On the coins of Ascalon, where she was held in great honour, is figured a goddess above whose head is a half-moon, and at her feet a woman with her lower extremities like a fish. This is Semiramis, who, according to a popular legend, was the child of Derceto. At Joppa she appears as a mermaid. The story was, that she fled from Typhon, and plunged into the sea, concealing herself under the form of a fish. According to Plutarch, the Syrian Tirgata, the Derceto of Palestine, was the goddess of moisture[6]; and Lucan (De dea Syra, c. 14) declares that she was represented as a woman with a fish-tail from her hips downward.

In every mythology, the different attributes of

[6] Plutarch, Crass. c. 17. According to Greek mythology, this goddess, under the name of Ceto, "with comely cheeks," is the daughter of Sea and Earth, and wife of Phorcys (Hesiod, Theog. v. 235. 270).

the deity in process of time became distinct gods, yet with sufficient impress of their origin still upon them to make that origin easy to be detected.

As On, the sun-god rising and setting in the sea, was supplied with a corresponding moon-goddess, Atergatis, and Bel or Baal, also a solar deity, had his lunar Baalti, so the fiery Moloch, "the great lord," was supplied with his Mylitta, "the birth-producer." Moloch was the fierce flame-god, and Mylitta the goddess of moisture. Their worship was closely united. The priests of Moloch wore female attire, the priestesses of Mylitta were dressed like men. Human sacrifices characterized the worship of the fire-god, prostitution that of the goddess of water. From her came the names of the hetaræ Melitta, Meleto, Milto, Milesia (Athenæus, lib. xiii.). Among the Carthaginians, this goddess was worshipped, as appears from their giving the name of Magasmelita (the tent of Mylitta) to one of the African provinces. Mylitta was identical with Atergatis; she was regarded as a universal mother, a source of life.

In Greece, the priestesses of Demeter were called Melissæ, the high-priest of Apollo was entitled *κύριος τῶν μελλισσῶν*. A fable was invented to account for this name, and to connect

them with bees and honey; but I have little doubt that it was corrupted from the Semitic designation of the servants of Mylitta. The Melissæ are sometimes spoken of as nymphs, but are not to be identified with the Meliadæ, Dryads sprung from the ash. Yet Melia, daughter of Oceanus, who plunges into the Haliacmon, strongly resembles the Syrian goddess. Selene, the moon, was also known by the name Melissa. *Καὶ τὰς Δήμητρος ἱερείας, ὡς τῆς χθονίας θεᾶς μυστίδας, μελίσσας οἱ παλαιοὶ ἐκάλουν, αὐτήν τε τὴν Κόρην μελισσώδη, Σελήνην τε, οὖσαν γενέσεως προστατίδα μέλισσαν ἐκάλουν*[7].

When we remember the double character of Mylitta, as a generative or all-mother, and as a moon-goddess, we are able to account for her name having passed into the Greek titles of priestesses of their corresponding goddesses Demeter and Selene.

The name Melissa was probably introduced into Gaul by the Phocian colony at Massilia, the modern Marseilles, and passed into the popular mythology of the Gallic Kelts as the title of nymphs, till it was finally appropriated by the Melusina of romance.

[7] Schol. Theocr. xv. 94. Porphyr. de Antro Nymph. c. 18.

It may seem difficult at first sight to trace the connexion between the moon, a water-goddess, and a deity presiding over childbirth; yet it is certain that such a connexion does exist. The classic Venus was born of the sea-foam, and was unmistakably one with the moon. She was also the goddess of love, and was resorted to by barren women—as the Venus of Quimperle in Brittany is, to this day, sought by those who have no children.

On the Syrian coast, they told of their goddess plunging into the sea, because they saw the moon descend into the western waters; but the Cretans, who beheld her rise above the eastern horizon of sea, fabled of a foam-born goddess.

In classic iconography the Tritons, and in later art the Sirens, are represented half fish, half human. Originally the Sirens were winged, but after the fable had been accepted, which told of their strife with the Muses, and their precipitation into the sea, they were figured like mermaids; the fish-form was by them borrowed from Derceto. It is curious how widely-spread is the belief in fish-women. The prevalence of tales of mermaids among Celtic populations indicates these water-nymphs as having been originally deities of those

peoples; and I cannot but believe that the circular mirror they are usually represented as holding is a reminiscence of the moon-disk. Bothe, in his "Kronecke der Sassen," in 1492, described a god, Krodo, worshipped in the Hartz, who was represented with his feet on a fish, a wheel to symbolize the moon in one hand, and a pail of water in the other. As among the Northern nations the moon is masculine, its deity was male. Probably the Mexican Coxcox or Teocipactli (i.e. Fish-god) was either a solar or lunar deity. He was entitled Huehueton-acateo-cateo-cipatli, or Fish-god-of-our-flesh, to give him his name in full; he somewhat resembled the Noah of Sacred Writ; for the Mexican fable related, that in a great time of flood, when the earth was covered with water, he rescued himself in a cypress trunk, and peopled the world with wise and intelligent beings [8]. The Babylonish Oannes was also identified with the flood.

The Peruvians had likewise their semi-fish gods, but the legend connected with them has not descended to our days.

The North-American Indians relate that they were conducted from Northern Asia by a man-fish.

[8] Müller, Geschichte der Amerikanischen Urreligionen. Basel, 1855, p. 515.

"Once upon a time, in the season of opening buds, the people of our nation were much terrified at seeing a strange creature, much resembling a man, riding upon the waves. He had upon his head long green hair, much resembling the coarse weeds which the mighty storms scatter along the margin of the strand. Upon his face, which was shaped like that of a porpoise, he had a beard of the same colour. But if our people were frightened at seeing a man who could live in the water like a fish or a duck, how much more were they frightened when they saw that from his breast down he was actually a fish, or rather two fishes, for each of his legs was a whole and distinct fish. And there he would sit for hours singing to the wondering ears of the Indians the beautiful things he saw in the depths of the ocean, always closing his strange stories with these words:—'Follow me, and see what I will show you.' For a great many suns, they dared not venture upon the water; but when they grew hungry, they at last put to sea, and following the man-fish, who kept close to the boat, reached the American coast[9]."

It is not impossible that the North-American

[9] Epitomized from Traditions of the North-American Indians, by J. A. Jones. 1830, pp. 47—58.

Indians may have symbolized the sun in the same manner as the Syrians, and that this legend may signify that the early colonists, to reach the New Land, followed the *fish*-course of the sun, which as man goes from East to West, whereas when it dives it swims from West to East, the course taken by the Indians in their canoes. The wanderers in the Canadian forests have also their fish-woman, of whom a tale is related which bears a lively resemblance to that of Undine, and which is not a little like that of Melusina.

One day an Ottawa chief, whilst sitting by the water side, beheld a beautiful woman rise from the flood, her face exquisitely lovely, her eyes blue, her teeth white, and her locks floating over her shoulders. From her waist downwards she was fish, or rather two fishes. She entreated the warrior to permit her to live on earth, as she desired to win a human soul, which could only be acquired by union with a mortal. He consented and took her to his house, where she was to him as a daughter. Some years after an Andirondack youth beheld and loved her. He took her to wife, and she obtained that which she had desired—a human soul.

In the Undine story, a water-maiden, in like

manner and for a like object, is adopted by an old fisherman, and becomes the bride of a youthful German knight. But the Andirondack tribe was ill-pleased at the marriage of their chief with the mysterious damsel, and they tore her from his arms, and drove her back to her original element. Then all the water-spirits vowed revenge at the insult offered to one of their race; they stirred up war between the Ottawas and Andirondacks, which led to the extermination of the latter; one only was rescued, and he was grasped by the fish-wife, and by her borne down to the watery depths below the Falls of S. Anthony. In the German story, the husband is weary with the taunts of those around at having married a water-sprite, and bids her return to her element. Then the spirits of the flood vow his destruction, and send Undine on earth to embrace her faithless lord, and kiss him to death. The name of the fish-woman is in German Meerfrau or Meriminni; in Danish, the Siren is Maremind; and in Icelandic and old Norse, Marmennill; in Irish she is the Merrow; with the Breton peasantry she is Marie-Morgan. In the legendary lore of all these people, there are stories of the loves of a mortal man and a mermaid. According to Mr. Crofton Croker, O'Sullivan

More, Lord of Dunkerron, lost his heart to one of these beautiful water-sprites, and she agreed to be his, but her parents resented the union and killed her.

On the shore of Smerwick harbour, an Irishman, Dick Fitzgerald, caught a Merrow with her *cohuleen driuth*, or enchanted cap, lying on a rock beside her. He grasped the cap, and thereby possessed himself of the nymph, who, however, seemed nothing loth to obtain a mortal husband. They lived together happily for some years, and saw a family of beautiful children grow up at their knees. But one day the Lady of Gollerus, as she was called, discovered her old cap in a corner. She took it up and looked at it, and then thought of her father the king and her mother the queen, and felt a longing to go back to them. She kissed the babies, and then went down to the strand with the full intention of returning to Gollerus after a brief visit to her home. However, no sooner was the *cohuleen driuth* on her head, than all remembrance of her life on earth was forgotten, and she plunged into the sea, never to return. Similar tales are related in Shetland, the Faroes, in Iceland, and Norway.

Vade, the father of the famous smith Velund,

was the son of King Vilkin and a mermaid whom he met in a wood on the sea-shore in Russia[1]. In the Saga of Half and his knights is an account of a merman who was caught and kept a little while on land. He sang the following entreaty to be taken back to his native element—

"Cold water to the eyes!
Flesh raw to the teeth!
A shroud to the dead!
Flit me back to the sea!
Henceforward never
Men in ships sailing!
Draw me to dry land
From the depth of the sea[2]!"

In the "Speculum Regale," an Icelandic work of the twelfth century, is the following description of a mermaid:—

"A monster is seen also near Greenland, which people call the Margygr. This creature appears like a woman as far down as her waist, with breast and bosom like a woman, long hands, and soft hair, the neck and head in all respects like those of a human being. The hands seem to people to be long, and the fingers not to be parted, but united by a web like that on the feet of water-

[1] Vilkina Saga, c. 18.
[2] Halfs Saga ok rekum hans, c. 7.

birds. From the waist downwards, this monster resembles a fish, with scales, tail, and fins. This prodigy is believed to show itself especially before heavy storms. The habit of this creature is to dive frequently and rise again to the surface with fishes in its hands. When sailors see it playing with the fish, or throwing them towards the ship, they fear that they are doomed to lose several of the crew; but when it casts the fish, or, turning from the vessel, flings them away from her, then the sailors take it as a good omen that they will not suffer loss in the impending storm. This monster has a very horrible face, with broad brow and piercing eyes, a wide mouth, and double chin[3]." The Landnama, or Icelandic Doomsday book, speaks of a Marmennill, or merman, having been caught off the island of Grimsey; and the annals of the same country relate the appearance of these beings off the coast in 1305 and in 1329.

Megasthenes reported that the sea which washed Taprobane, the modern Ceylon, was inhabited by a creature having the appearance of a woman; and Ælian improved this account, by stating that there are whales having the form of Satyrs. In 1187, a

[3] Quoted in "Iceland, its Scenes and Sagas," p. 349.

merman was fished up off the coast of Suffolk. It closely resembled a man, but was not gifted with speech. One day, when it had the opportunity to escape, it fled to the sea, plunged in, and was never seen again. Pontoppidan records the appearance of a merman, which was deposed to on oath by the observers.

"About a mile from the coast of Denmark, near Landscrona, three sailors, observing something like a dead body floating in the water, rowed towards it. When they came within seven or eight fathoms, it still appeared as at first, for it had not stirred; but at that instant it sank, and came up almost immediately in the same place. Upon this, out of fear, they lay still, and then let the boat float, that they might the better examine the monster, which, by the help of the current, came nearer and nearer to them. He turned his face and stared at them, which gave them a good opportunity of examining him narrowly. He stood in the same place for seven or eight minutes, and was seen above the water breast-high. At last they grew apprehensive of some danger, and began to retire; upon which the monster blew up his cheeks and made a kind of lowing noise, and then dived from their view. In regard to his form, they declare in their affidavits, which were

regularly taken and recorded, that he appeared like an old man, strong limbed, with broad shoulders, but his arms they could not see. His head was small in proportion to his body, and had short, curled black hair, which did not reach below his ears; his eyes lay deep in his head, and he had a meagre face, with a black beard; about the body downwards, this merman was quite pointed like a fish[4]."

In the year 1430, after a violent tempest, which broke down the dykes in Holland and flooded the low lands, some girls of the town of Edam in West Friesland, going in a boat to milk their cows, observed a mermaid in shallow water and embarrassed in the mud.

They took it into their boat and brought it into Edam, dressed it in female attire, and taught it to spin. It fed with them, but never could be taught to speak. It was afterwards brought to Haerlem, where it lived for several years, though still showing a strong inclination for water. Parival, in his "Délices de Hollande," relates that it was instructed in its duty to God, and that it made reverences before a crucifix. Old Hudson, the navigator, in

[4] Pontoppidan's Nat. Hist. of Norway, p. 154.

his dry and ponderous narrative, records the following incident, when trying to force a passage to the pole near Nova Zembla, lat. 75°, on the 15th June. "This morning, one of our company looking overboard saw a mermaid; and calling up some of the company to see her, one more came up, and by that time she was come close to the ship's side, looking earnestly at the men. A little after, a sea came and overturned her. From the navel upward, her back and breasts were like a woman's, as they say that saw her; her body as big as one of us, her skin very white, and long hair hanging down behind, of colour black. In her going down they saw her tail, which was like the tail of a porpoise, speckled like a mackerel. Their names that saw her were Thomas Hilles and Robert Rayner."

In 1560, near the island of Mandar, on the west of Ceylon, some fishermen entrapped in their net seven mermen and mermaids, of which several Jesuits, and Father Henriques, and Bosquez, physician to the Viceroy of Goa, were witnesses. The physician examined them with a great deal of care, and dissected them. He asserts that the internal and external structure resembled that of human beings. We have another account of a merman seen near the great rock Diamon, on the

coast of Martinique. The persons who saw it gave a precise description of it before a notary; they affirmed that they saw it wipe its hands over its face, and even heard it blow its nose. Another creature of the same species was captured in the Baltic in 1531, and sent as a present to Sigismund, King of Poland, with whom it lived three days, and was seen by all the Court. Another was taken near Rocca de Sintra, as related by Damian Góes. The King of Portugal and the Grand-Master of the Order of St. James are said to have had a suit at law, to determine which party the creature belonged to.

Captain Weddell, well known for his geographical discoveries in the extreme south of the globe, relates the following story:—"A boat's crew were employed on Hall's Island, when one of the crew, left to take care of some produce, saw an animal whose voice was even musical. The sailor had lain down, and about ten o'clock he heard a noise resembling human cries; and as daylight in these latitudes never disappears at this season, he rose and looked around, but, on seeing no person, returned to bed. Presently he heard the noise again, rose a second time, but still saw nothing. Conceiving, however, the possibility of a boat

being upset, and that some of the crew might be clinging to some detached rocks, he walked along the beach a few steps, and heard the noise more distinctly, but in a musical strain. Upon searching round, he saw an object lying on a rock a dozen yards from the shore, at which he was somewhat frightened. The face and shoulders appeared of human form, and of a reddish colour; over the shoulders hung long green hair; the tail resembled that of the seal, but the extremities of the arms he could not see distinctly. The creature continued to make a musical noise while he gazed about two minutes, and on perceiving him it disappeared in an instant. Immediately when the man saw his officer, he told this wild tale, and to add weight to his testimony (being a Romanist) he made a cross on the sand, which he kissed, as making oath to the truth of his statement, When I saw him, he told the story in so clear and positive a manner, making oath to its truth, that I concluded he must really have seen the animal he described, or that it must have been the effect of a disturbed imagination[5]."

In a splendidly illustrated work with plates

[5] Voyage towards the South Pole, p. 143, quoted by Goss: Romance of Nat. Hist., 2nd Series.

coloured by hand, "Poissons, écrevisses et crabes de diverses couleurs et figures extraordinaires, que l'on trouve autour des Isles Moluques," dedicated to King George of England, and published by Louis Renard at Amsterdam, in 1717, is a curious account of a mermaid. This book was the result of thirty years labour, in the Indian seas, by Baltazar Coyett, Governor of the Islands of the

Province of Amboine and President of the Commissioners in Batavia, and by Adrien Van der Stell, Governor Regent of the Province of Amboine. In the 2nd volume, p. 240, is the picture of a mermaid here reproduced, and the subjoined description :—

"See-wyf. A monster resembling a Siren, caught near the island of Borné, or Boeren, in the Department of Amboine. It was 59 inches long, and in proportion as an eel. It lived on land, in a vat full of water, during four days seven hours. From

time to time it uttered little cries like those of a mouse. It would not eat, though it was offered small fish, shells, crabs, lobsters, &c. After its death, some excrement was discovered in the vat, like the secretion of a cat." The copy from which I have taken the representation for this work is thus coloured: hair, the hue of kelp; body, olive tint; webbed olive between the fingers, which have each four joints; the fringe round the waist orange, with a blue border; the fins green, face slate-grey; a delicate row of pink hairs runs the length of the tail.

With such a portrait we may well ask with Tennyson—

> "Who would be
> A mermaid fair,
> Singing alone,
> Combing her hair
> Under the sea
> In a golden curl,
> With a comb of pearl,
> On a throne?"

The introduction to the book contains additional information.

The *Avertissement de l'Editeur* says:—"M. Baltazar Coyett is the first to whom the great discovery is due. Whilst governor, he encouraged the fishery of these fishes; and after having had about two hundred painted of those which were

brought to his home by the Indians of Amboine and the neighbouring isles, as well as by the Dutch there settled, he formed of them two collections, the originals of which were brought by his son to M. Scott the Elder, who was then chief advocate, or prime minister, of the Company General of the East Indies at Amsterdam. He had them copied exactly. The second volume, *less correct* indeed in the exactitude of the drawings, but very curious on account of the novelties wherewith it is filled, and of the remarks accompanying each fish, was taken from the collection of M. Van der Stell, Governor of the Moluccas, by a painter named Gamael Fallours, who brought them to me from the Indies, and of which I have selected about 250. Moreover, to check incredulity in certain persons, I have thought fit to subjoin the following certificates." Among them, the most curious are those relating to the mermaid.

Letter from Renard, the publisher, to M. François Valentyn, minister of the Gospel at Dort, late superintendent of the churches in the colonies, dated Amsterdam, Dec. 17, 1716.

"Monsieur,

"His Majesty the Czar of Muscovy having

done me the honour of visiting my house, and having had occasion to show the prince the work on the fishes of the Molucca islands, by the Sieur Fallours, in which, among other drawings, is the enclosed plate, representing a monster resembling a Siren, which this painter says that he saw alive for four days at Amboine, as you will be pleased to see in the writing with his own hand, which accompanies this picture, and as he believes that M. Van der Stell, the present Governor of Amboine, may have sent it to you, I remarked that his Majesty the Czar would be much gratified to have this fact substantiated ; wherefore I shall be greatly obliged if you will favour me with a reply.

"I remain, &c."

REPLY.

"DORT, *Dec.* 18, 1716.

"Monsieur,

"It is not impossible that, since my departure from the Indies, Fallours may have seen at Amboine the monster whose picture you had the courtesy to send me, and which I return enclosed ; but up to the present moment I have neither seen nor heard of the original. If I had the creature, I would with all my heart make a present of it to

his Majesty the Czar, whose application in the research of objects of curiosity deserves the praise of all the world. But, sir, as evidence that there are monsters in nature resembling this Siren, I may say that I know for certain, that in the year 1652 or 1653 a lieutenant in the service of the Company saw two of these beings in the gulf, near the village of Hennetelo, near the islands of Ceram and Bœro, in the Department of Amboine. They were swimming side by side, which made him presume that one was male, the other female. Six weeks after they reappeared in the same spot, and were seen by more than fifty persons. These monsters were of a greenish grey colour, having precisely the shape of human beings from the head to the waist, with arms and hands, but their bodies tapered away. One was larger than the other; their hair was moderately long. I may add that, on my way back from the Indies, in which I resided thirty years, I saw, on the 1st May, 1714, long. 12° 18′, and on the Meridian, during clear, calm weather, at the distance of three or four ship-lengths off, a monster, which was apparently a sort of marine-man, of a bluish grey (gris de mer). It was raised well above the surface, and seemed to have a sort of fisher's cap of moss on its head. All the ship's

company saw it, as well as myself; but although its back was turned towards us, the monster seemed conscious that we were approaching too near, and it dived suddenly under water, and we saw it no more.

"I am, &c.,

"F. VALENTYN."

Letter from M. Parent, Pastor of the church of Amsterdam, written and exhibited before the notary Jacob Lansman.

"AMSTERDAM, *July* 15, 1717.

"Monsieur,

"I have seen with mingled pleasure and surprise the illuminated proofs of the beautiful plates which you have had engraved, representing the fishes of Molucca, which were painted from nature by the Sieur Samuel Fallours, with whom I was acquainted when at Amboine. I own, sir, that I was struck with astonishment at the sight of this work, the engravings of which closely resemble the fishes I have seen during my life, and which, or some of which, I have had the pleasure of eating during the thirteen years I resided at Amboine, from which I returned with the fleet in 1716. . . . Touching your inquiry, whether I ever saw a

Siren in that country, I reply that, whilst making the circuit of our churches in the Molucca Isles (which is done twice in the year by the pastors who understand the language of the country), and navigating in an *orambay*, or species of galley, between the villages of Holilieuw and Karieuw, distant from one another about two leagues by water, it happened, whilst I was dozing, that the negro rowers uttered a shrill cry of astonishment, which aroused me with a start; and when I inquired the cause of their outcry, they replied unanimously that they had seen clearly and distinctly a monster like a Siren, with a face resembling that of a man, and long hair like that of a woman floating down its back; but at their cry it had replunged into the sea, and all I could see was the agitation of the water where this Siren had disturbed it by diving.

"I am, sir, &c.,

"PARENT."

One of the most remarkable accounts of a mermaid is that in Dr. Robert Hamilton's "History of the Whales and Seals," in the "Naturalist's Library," he himself vouching for its general truth, from personal knowledge of some of the parties. "It was reported that a fishing-boat off the island

of Yell, one of the Shetland group, had captured a mermaid by its getting entangled in the lines." The statement is, that the animal was about three feet long, the upper part of the body resembling the human, with protuberant mammæ, like a woman; the face, the forehead, and neck were short, and resembling those of a monkey; the arms, which were small, were kept folded across the breast; the fingers were distinct, not webbed; a few stiff, long bristles were on the top of the head, extending down to the shoulders, and these it could erect and depress at pleasure, something like a crest. The inferior part of the body was like a fish. The skin was smooth, and of a grey colour. It offered no resistance, nor attempted to bite, but uttered a low, plaintive sound. The crew, six in number, took it within their boat; but superstition getting the better of curiosity, they carefully disentangled it from the lines and from a hook which had accidentally fastened in its body, and returned it to its native element. It instantly dived, descending in a perpendicular direction.

"After writing the above, (we are informed) the narrator had an interview with the skipper of the boat and one of the crew, from whom he learned the following additional particulars. They had

the animal for three hours within the boat; the body was without scales or hair, was of a silver-grey colour above and white below, like the human skin; no gills were observed, nor fins on the back or belly; the tail was like that of the dog-fish; the mammæ were about as large as those of a woman; the mouth and lips were very distinct, and resembled the human. This communication was from Mr. Edmonton, a well-known and intelligent observer, to the distinguished professor of natural history in the Edinburgh University; and Mr. E. adds a few reflections, which are so pertinent that we shall avail ourselves of them. That a very peculiar animal has been taken, no one can doubt. It was seen and handled by six men on one occasion and for some time, not one of whom dreams of a doubt of its being a mermaid. If it were supposed that their fears magnified its supposed resemblance to the human form, it must at all events be admitted that there was some ground for exciting these fears. But no such fears were likely to be entertained; for the mermaid is not an object of terror to the fisherman: it is rather a welcome guest, and danger is to be apprehended only from its experiencing bad treatment. The usual resources of scepticism, that the seals and other sea-animals,

appearing under certain circumstances, operating on an excited imagination, and so producing ocular illusion, cannot avail here. It is quite impossible that, under the circumstances, six Shetland fishermen could commit such a mistake."

One of these creatures was found in the belly of a shark, on the north-west coast of Iceland, and is thus described by Wernhard Guthmund's son, priest of Ottrardale :—

"The lower part of the animal was entirely eaten away, whilst the upper part, from the epigastric and hypogastric region, was in some places partially eaten, in others completely devoured. The sternum, or breast-bone, was perfect. This animal appeared to be about the size of a boy eight or nine years old, and its head was formed like that of a man. The anterior surface of the occiput was very protuberant, and the nape of the neck had a considerable indentation or sinking. The alæ of the ears were very large, and extended a good way back. It had front teeth, which were long and pointed, as were also the larger teeth. The eyes were lustreless, and resembled those of a codfish. It had on its head long black, coarse hair, very similar to the *fucus filiformis;* this hair hung over the shoulders. Its

forehead was large and round. The skin above the eyelids was much wrinkled, scanty, and of a bright olive colour, which was indeed the hue of the whole body. The chin was cloven, the shoulders were high, and the neck uncommonly short. The arms were of their natural size, and each hand had a thumb and four fingers covered with flesh. Its breast was formed exactly like that of a man, and there was also to be seen something like nipples; the back was also like that of a man. It had very cartilaginous ribs; and in parts where the skin had been rubbed off, a black, coarse flesh was perceptible, very similar to that of the seal. This animal, after having been exposed about a week on the shore, was again thrown into the sea[6]."

To the manufactured mermaids which come from Japan, and which are exhibited at shows, it is not necessary to do more than allude; they testify to the Japanese conception of a sea-creature resembling the Tritons of ancient Greece, the Syrian On and Derceto, the Scandinavian Marmennill, and the Mexican Coxcox.

[6] Quoted in my "Iceland, its Scenes and Sagas."

The Fortunate Isles

IN my article on the "Terrestrial Paradise" I mentioned the principal mediæval fables existing relative to that blessed spot, which was located, according to popular belief, in the remote East of Asia. The Ancients had a floating tradition relative to a vast continent called Atlantis, in the far West, where lay Kronos asleep, guarded by Briareus; a land of rivers, and woods, and soft airs, occupying in their thoughts the position assumed in Christian belief by the earthly paradise. The Fathers of the Church waged war against this object of popular mythology, for Scripture plainly indicated the position of the garden land as "eastward in Eden" (Gen. ii. 8); but, notwithstanding their attempts to drive the western paradise from the minds of men, it held its ground, and was believed in through-

out the middle ages, till Christopher Columbus sought and found Atlantis and paradise in the new world, a world in which the theories of the Ancients and of the Mediævals met, for it was truly east of Asia and west of Europe. "The saintly theologians and philosophers were right," are the words of the great admiral in one of his letters, "when they fixed the site of the terrestrial paradise in the extreme Orient, because it is a most temperate clime; and the lands which I have just discovered are the limits of the Orient;" an opinion he repeats in his letter of 1498: "I am convinced that there is the terrestrial paradise," namely that which had been located by SS. Ambrose, Isidore, and the Venerable Bede in the East[1].

The belief in a western land, or group of islands, was prevalent among the Kelts as well as the Greek and Latin geographers, and was with them an article of religion, upon which were founded superstitious practices, which perpetuated themselves after the introduction of Christianity.

This belief in a western land probably arose from the discovery of objects, unfamiliar and foreign, washed up on the European shores. In the life of Columbus, Martin Vincent, pilot of the King of

[1] Navarrette, Coll. de Documents, i. p. 244.

Portugal, picked up off Cape S. Vincent a piece of carved wood; and a similar fragment was washed ashore on the Island of Madeira, and found by Pedro Correa, brother-in-law of the great navigator. The inhabitants of the Azores said that when the wind blew from the West, there were brought ashore great bamboos and pines of a description wholly unknown to them. On the sands of the Island of Flores were found one day the bodies of two men with large faces, and with features very different from those of Europeans. On another occasion, two canoes were driven on the coast filled with strange men [2]. In 1682, a Greenland canoe appeared off the Isle of Eda in the Orkneys, and in the church of Burra was long preserved an Esquimaux boat which had been washed ashore [3]. On the stormy coast of the Hebrides are often found nuts, which are made by the fishermen into snuff-boxes or worn as amulets. Martin, who wrote of the Western Isles in 1703, calls them "Molluka beans." They are seeds of the *Mimosa scandens*, washed by the gulf-stream across the Atlantic to our shores. Great logs of drift-wood of a strange character are

[2] Herrera, Hist. General, Dec. i. lib. i. cap. 2.

[3] Wallace, An Account of the Islands of Orkney, 1700, p. 60.

also carried to the same coasts, and are used by the islanders in the construction of their hovels.

In 1508, a French vessel met with a boat full of American Indians not far off the English coast, as Bembo tells us in his history of Venice [4]. Other instances have been cited by commentators on the curious fragment of Cornelius Nepos, which gave rise in the middle ages to a discussion of the possibility of forcing a north-west passage to India. Humboldt, in his remarks on this passage, says: "Pomponius Mela, who lived at a period sufficiently near that of Cornelius Nepos, relates, and Pliny repeats it, that Metellus Celer, whilst Proconsul of Gaul, received as a gift from a king of the Boii or Boeti (the name is somewhat uncertain, and Pliny calls him a king of the Suevi) some Indians who, driven by the tempests from the Indian seas, landed on the coasts of Germany. It is of no importance discussing here whether Metellus Celer is the same as the Prætor of Rome in the year of the consulship of Cicero, and afterwards consul conjointly with L. Africanus; or whether the German king was Ariovistus, conquered by Julius Cæsar. What is

[4] Bembo, Hist. Ven. vii. p. 257.

certain is, that from the chain of ideas which lead Mela to cite this fact as indisputable, one may conclude that in his time it was believed in Rome that these swarthy men sent from Germany into Gaul had come across the ocean which bathes the East and North of Asia[5]."

The canoes, bodies, timber, and nuts, washed up on the western coasts of Europe, may have originated the belief in there being a land beyond the setting sun; and this country, when once supposed to exist, was variously designated as Meropis, the continent of Kronos, Ogygia, Atlantis, the Fortunate Isles, or the Garden of the Hesperides. Strabo says distinctly that the only hindrance in the way of passing west from Iberia to India is the vastness of the Atlantic ocean, but that "in the same temperate zone as we inhabit, and especially about the parallel passing through Thinæ and traversing the Atlantic, there may exist two inhabited countries, and perhaps even more than two[6]." A more distinct prophecy of America than the vague expressions of Seneca—"Finitam cuique rei magnitudinem natura dederat, dedit et modum: nihil infi-

[5] Humboldt, Essai sur l'Hist. de la Géographie du N. Continent, ii. p. 264, note 2.

[6] Strabo, Geog. lib. ii.

nitum est nisi Oceanus. Fertiles in Oceano jacere terras, ultraque Oceanum rursus alia littora, alium nasci orbem, nec usquam naturam rerum desinere, sed semper inde ubi desiisse videatur, novam exsurgere, facile ista finguntur, quia Oceanus navigari non potest" (Suasoria, I.). Aristotle accepted the notion of there being a new continent in the West, and described it, from the accounts of the Carthaginians, as a land opposite the Pillars of Hercules (Str. of Gibraltar), fertile, well-watered, and covered with forests[7]. Diodorus gives the Phœnicians the credit of having discovered it, and adds that there are lofty mountains in that country, and that the temperature is not subject to violent changes[8]. He however tries to distinguish between it and the Elysium of Homer, the Fortunate Isles of Pindar, and the Garden of the Hesperides. The Carthaginians began to found colonies there, but were forbidden by law, as it was feared that the old mother settlement would be deserted for the new and more attractive country. Plutarch locates Homer's Island of Ogygia five days' sail to the west of Brittia, and he adds, the great continent, or terra firma, is five thousand stadia from Ogygia. It stretches far

[7] Aristot. De Mirab. Aucult. c. 84.

[8] Diod. Hist., ed. Wessel, tom. i. p. 244.

away towards the north, and the people inhabiting this great land regard the old world as a small island. This is an observation made also by Theopompus, in his geographical myth of Meropis[9].

The ancient theories of Atlantis shall detain us no longer, as they have been carefully and exhaustively treated by Humboldt in the already quoted work on the geography of the New World. We shall therefore pass to the Kelts, and learn the position occupied by America in their mythology.

Brittia, says Procopius, lies 200 stadia from the coast between Britannia and Thule, opposite the mouth of the Rhine, and is inhabited by Angles, Frisians, and Britons[1]. By Britannia he means the present Brittany, and Brittia is England. Tzetze relates that on the ocean coast, opposite Britannia, live fishermen subject to the Franks, but freed from paying tribute, on account of their occupation, which consists in rowing souls across to the opposite coast[2]. Procopius tells the same story, and Sir Walter Scott gives it from him in his "Count Robert of Paris." "I have read," says Agelastes, "in that brilliant mirror which reflects the times of our fathers, the

[9] Ælian, Var. Hist. iii. 18.
[1] De Bello Gothico, lib. iv. 20.
[2] Ad Lycophr. v. 1200.

volumes of the learned Procopius, that beyond Gaul, and nearly opposite to it, but separated by an arm of the sea, lies a ghastly region, on which clouds and tempests for ever rest, and which is known to its continental neighbours as the abode to which departed spirits are sent after this life. On one side of the strait dwell a few fishermen, men possessed of a strange character, and enjoying singular privileges in consideration of thus being the living ferrymen who, performing the office of the heathen Charon, carry the spirits of the departed to the island which is their residence after death. At the dead of the night these fishermen are in rotation summoned to perform the duty by which they seem to hold permission to reside on this strange coast. A knock is heard at the door of his cottage, who holds the turn of this singular office, sounded by no mortal hand; a whispering, as of a decaying breeze, summons the ferryman to his duty. He hastens to his bark on the sea-shore, and has no sooner launched it, than he perceives its hull sink sensibly in the water, so as to express the weight of the dead with whom it is filled. No form is seen; and though voices are heard, yet the accents are undistinguishable, as of one who speaks in his sleep." According to Villemarqué, the place

whence the boat put off with its ghostly freight was near Raz, a headland near the Bay of Souls, in the extreme west of Finisterre. The bare, desolate valleys of this cape, opposite the Island of Seint, with its tarn of Kleden, around which dance nightly the skeletons of drowned mariners, the abyss of Plogoff, and the wild moors studded with Druid monuments, make it a scene most suitable for the assembly of the souls previous to their ghastly voyage. Here, too, in Yawdet, the ruins of an ancient town near Llannion, has been identified the Ὑάδιτοι of Strabo.

"On the great island of Brittia," continues Procopius, "the men of olden time built a great wall cutting off a great portion of the land. East of this wall, there was a good climate and abundant crops, but west of it, on the contrary, it was such that no man could live there an hour; it was the haunt of myriads of serpents and other reptiles, and if any one crossed the wall, he died at once, poisoned by the noxious exhalations." This belief, which acted as a second wall to the realm of the dead, preserved strict privacy for the spirits. Procopius declares that this tradition was widely spread, and that it was reported to him by many people.

Claudian also heard of the same myth, but con-

fused it with that of the nether world of Odysseus. "At the extreme coast of Gaul is a spot protected from the tides of Ocean, where Odysseus by blood-shed allured forth the silent folk, There are heard wailing cries, and the light fluttering around of the shadows. And the natives there see pale, statue-like figures and dead corpses wandering[3]." According to Philemon in Pliny, the Cimbri called the Northern Ocean Morimarusa, *i.e.* mare mortuum, the sea of the dead.

In the old romance of Lancelot du Lac, the Demoiselle d'Escalot directed that after death her body should be placed richly adorned in a boat, and allowed to float away before the wind; a trace of the ancient belief in the passage over sea to the soul-land.

> "There take the little bed on which I died
> For Lancelot's love, and deck it like the Queen's
> For richness, and me also like the Queen
> In all I have of rich, and lay me on it.
> And let there be prepared a chariot-bier
> To take me to the river, and a barge
> Be ready on the river, clothed in black."
>
> TENNYSON'S *Elaine*.

And the grave-digger in Hamlet sings of being at death

[3] In Rufin. i. 123—133.

". . . shipp'd intill the land,
As if I had never been such."
Act v. Sc. 1.

When King Arthur was about to die, with a mortal wound in the head, he was brought by good Sir Bedivere to the water's side.

"And when they were at the water's side, even fast by the banke, hoved a little barge with many faire ladies in it, and among them all was a queene, and all they had blacke hoods, and they wept and shriked when they saw King Arthur. 'Now put mee into the barge,' said the king; and so hee did softly; and there received him three queenes with great mourning, and so these three queenes set them downe, and in one of their laps King Arthur laide his head. And then that queene said, 'Ah! deer brother, why have ye tarried so long from me? Alas! this wound on your head hath taken over much cold.' And so then they rowed from the land, and Sir Bedivere cried, 'Ah! my lord Arthur, what shall become of mee now ye goe from me, and leave me here alone among mine enemies?' 'Comfort thy selfe,' said King Arthur, 'and do as well as thou maiest, for in mee is no trust for to trust in; for I wil into the vale of Avilion for to heale me of my greivous wound; and if thou

never heere more of mee, pray for my soule.' But evermore the queenes and the ladies wept and shriked that it was pity for to heare them. And as soone as Sir Bedivere had lost the sight of the barge, he wept and wailed, and so tooke the forrest[4]."

This fair Avalon—

> "Where falls not hail, or rain, or any snow,
> Nor ever wind blows loudly; but—lies
> Deep-meadow'd, happy, fair with orchard lawns
> And bowery hollows crown'd with summer sea,"

is the Isle of the Blessed of the Kelts. Tzetze and Procopius attempt to localize it, and suppose that the Land of Souls is Britain; but in this they are mistaken; as also are those who think to find Avalon at Glastonbury. Avalon is the Isle of Apples—a name reminding one of the Garden of the Hesperides in the far western seas, with its tree of golden apples in the midst. When we are told that in the remote Ogygia sleeps Kronos gently, watched by Briareus, till the time comes for his awaking, we have a Græcized form of the myth of Arthur in Avalon being cured of his grievous wound. It need hardly be said that the Arthur of romance is actually a demi-god, believed in

[4] La Mort d'Arthure, by Sir Thomas Malory, ed. Wright, vol. iii. c. 168.

long before the birth of the historic Arthur. This Ogygia, says Plutarch, lies due west, beneath the setting sun. According to an ancient poem published by M. Villemarqué, it is a place of enchanting beauty. There youths and maidens dance hand in hand on the dewy grass, green trees are laden with apples, and behind the woods the golden sun dips and rises. A murmuring rill flows from a spring in the midst of the island, and thence drink the spirits and obtain life with the draught. Joy, song, and minstrelsy reign in that blessed region[5]. There all is plenty, and the golden age ever lasts; cows give their milk in such abundance that they fill large ponds at a milking[6]. There, too, is a palace all of glass, floating in air, and receiving within its transparent walls the souls of the blessed: it is to this house of glass that Merddin Emrys and his nine bards voyage[7]. To this alludes Taliesin in his poem, "The Booty of the Deep," where he says, that the valour of Arthur is not retained in the glass enclosure. Into this mansion three classes of men obtain no admission —the tailors, of whom it takes nine to make a

[5] Villemarqué, Barz. Breiz, i. 193.
[6] Mém. de l'Acad. Celtique, v. p. 202.
[7] Davies, Mythology of the Druids, p. 522.

man, spending their days sitting, and whose hands, though they labour, are white; the warlocks, and the usurers [8].

In popular opinion, this distant isle was far more beautiful than paradise, and the rumours of its splendour so excited the mind of the mediævals, that the western land became the subject of satyre and jest. It was nicknamed Cocaigne or Schlaraffenland.

An English poem, "apparently written in the latter part of the thirteenth century," says Mr. Wright (S. Patrick's Purgatory), "which was printed very inaccurately by Hickes, from a manuscript which is now in the British Museum," describes Cocaigne as far away out to sea, west of Spain. Slightly modernized it runs thus :—

"Though Paradise be merry and bright,
Cokaygne is of fairer sight;
What is there in Paradise?
Both grass and flower and green ris (boughs).
Though there be joy and great dute (pleasure),
There is not meat, but fruit.
There is not hall, bower, nor bench,
But water man's thirst to quench."

In Paradise are only two men, Enoch and Elias, but Cocaigne is full of happy men and women.

[8] Barz. Breiz, ii. 99,

There is no land like it under heaven; it is there always day and never night; there quarrelling and strife are unknown; there no people die; there falls neither hail, rain, or snow, neither is thunder heard there, nor blustering winds—

> "There is a well fair abbaye
> Of white monks and of grey;
> There both bowers and halls,
> All of pasties be the walls,
> Of flesh, and fish, and rich meat,
> The like fullest that men may eat.
> Floweren cakes be the shingles all,
> Of church, cloister, bower, and hall.
> The pins be fat pudings,
> Rich meat to princes and kings."

The cloister is built of gems and spices, and all about are birds merrily singing, ready roasted flying into the hungry mouths; and there are buttered larks and "garlek gret plenté."

A French poem on this land describes it as a true cookery-land, as its nickname implies. All down the streets go roasted geese turning themselves; there is a river of wine; the ladies are all fair; every month one has new clothes. There bubbles up the fountain of perpetual youth, which will restore to bloom and vigour all who bathe in it, be they ever so old and ugly.

However much the burlesque poets of the Middle

Ages might laugh at this mysterious western region of blissful souls, it held its own in the belief of the people. Curiously enough, the same confusion between Britain and Avalon, which was made by Procopius, is still made by the German peasantry, who have their Engel-land which, through a similarity of name, they identify with England, to which they say, the souls of the dead are transported. In this land, according to Teutonic mythology, which in this point resembles the Keltic, is a glass mountain. In like manner the Slaves believe in a paradise for souls wherein is a large apple-orchard, in the midst of which rises a glass rock crowned with a golden palace; and in olden times they buried bear's claws with the dead, to assist him in climbing the crystal mountain [9].

The mysterious Western Land, in Irish, is called Thierna na oge, or the Country of Youth; and it is identified with a city of palaces and minsters sunk beneath the Atlantic, or at the bottom of lakes.

"The ancient Greek authors," says M. de Latocnaye in his pleasant tour through Ireland, quoted by Crofton Croker, "and Plato in particular, have

[9] Mannhardt, Germanische Mythen, 330 et seq.

recorded a tradition of an ancient world. They pretend that an immense island, or rather a vast continent, has been swallowed up by the sea to the west of Europe. It is more than probable that the inhabitants of Connemara have never heard of Plato or of the Greeks; nevertheless they have also their ancient tradition. 'Our land will reappear some day,' say the old men to the young folk, as they lead them on a certain day of the year to a mountain-top, and point out over the sea to them; the fishers also on their coasts pretend that they see towns and villages at the bottom of the water. The descriptions which they give of this imaginary country are as emphatic and exaggerated as those of the promised land: milk flows in some of the rivulets, others gush with wine; undoubtedly there are also streams of whisky and porter[1]."

The subject of cities beneath the water, which appear above the waves at dawn on Easter-day, or which can be seen by moonlight in the still depths of a lake, is too extensive to be considered here, opening up as it does questions of mythology

[1] Crofton Croker, Fairy Legends of the South of Ireland. 1862, p. 165. See also Kennedy, Popular Fictions of the Irish Celts. London, 1867.

which, to be fully discussed, would demand a separate paper. Each myth of antiquity touches other myths with either hand, and it is difficult to isolate one for consideration without being drawn into the discussion of other articles of belief on which it leans, and to which it is united. As in the sacred symbol of the Church each member predicates that which is to follow, and is a logical consequence of that which goes before, so that the excision of one article would destroy the completeness, and dissolve the unity of the faith—so, with the sacred beliefs of antiquity, one myth is linked to another, and cannot be detached without breaking into and destroying the harmony of the charmed circle.

But to confine ourselves to two points—the phantom western land, and the passage to it.

"Those who have read the history of the Canaries," writes Washington Irving, "may remember the wonders told of this enigmatical island. Occasionally it would be visible from their shores, stretching away in the clear bright west, to all appearance substantial like themselves, and still more beautiful. Expeditions would launch forth from the Canaries to explore this land of promise. For a time its sun-gilt peaks and long

shadowy promontories would remain distinctly visible; but in proportion as the voyagers approached, peak and promontory would gradually fade away, until nothing would remain but blue sky above and deep blue water below.

"Hence this mysterious isle was stigmatized by ancient cosmographers with the name of Aprositus, or the inaccessible[2]." The natives of the Canaries relate of this island, which they name after S. Brandan, the following tale. In the early part of the fifteenth century, there arrived in Lisbon an old bewildered pilot of the seas, who had been driven by the tempests he knew not whither, and raved about an island in the far deep, upon which he had landed, and which he had found peopled with Christians and adorned with noble cities. The inhabitants told him they were descendants of a band of Christians who fled from Spain, when that country was conquered by the Moslems. They were curious about the state of their fatherland, and grieved to hear that the Moslem still held possession of the kingdom of Granada. The old man, on his return to his ship, was caught by a tempest, whirled out once more to sea, and saw

[2] Washington Irving, Chronicles of Wolfert's Roost, and other Papers. Edinburgh, 1855, p. 312.

no more of the unknown island. This strange story caused no little excitement in Portugal and Spain. Those well versed in history remembered to have read that in the time of the conquest of Spain, in the eighth century, seven bishops, at the head of seven bands of exiles, had fled across the great ocean to some distant shores, where they might found seven Christian cities, and enjoy their faith unmolested. The fate of these wanderers had hitherto remained a mystery, and their story had faded from memory; but the report of the old pilot revived the long-forgotten theme, and it was determined, by the pious and enthusiastic, that this island thus accidentally discovered was the identical place of refuge, whither the wandering bishops had been guided with their flock by the hand of Providence. No one, however, entered into the matter with half the zeal of Don Fernando de Alma, a young cavalier of high standing in the Portuguese court, and of the meek, sanguine, and romantic temperament. The Island of the Seven Cities became now the constant subject of his thoughts by day and of his dreams by night; and he determined to fit out an expedition, and set sail in quest of the sainted island. Don Ioacos II. furnished him with a commission, constituting him

Adalantado, or governor, of any country he might discover, with the single proviso, that he should bear all the expenses of the discovery, and pay a tenth of the profits to the crown. With two vessels he put out to sea and steered for the Canaries—in those days the regions of nautical discovery and romance, and the outposts of the known world; for as yet Columbus had not crossed the ocean. Scarce had they reached those latitudes, than they were separated by a violent tempest. For many days the caravel of Don Fernando was driven about at the mercy of the elements, and the crew were in despair. All at once the storm subsided, the ocean sank into a calm, the clouds which had veiled the face of heaven were suddenly withdrawn, and the tempest-tossed mariners beheld a fair and mountainous island, emerging, as if by enchantment, from the murky gloom. The caravel now lay perfectly becalmed off the mouth of a river, on the banks of which, about a league off, was descried a noble city, with lofty walls and towers, and a protecting castle. After a time, a stately barge with sixteen oars was seen emerging from the river and approaching the vessel. Under a silken canopy in the stern sat a richly-clad cavalier, and over his head was a banner bearing the sacred emblem of

the cross. When the barge reached the caravel, the cavalier stepped on board and, in the old Castilian language, welcomed the strangers to the Island of the Seven Cities. Don Fernando could scarce believe that this was not all a dream. He made known his name and the object of his voyage. The Grand Chamberlain—such was the title of the cavalier from the island—assured him that, as soon as his credentials were presented, he would be acknowledged as the Adalantado of the Seven Cities. In the mean time, the day was waning; the barge was ready to convey him to land, and would assuredly bring him back. Don Fernando leaped into it after the Grand Chamberlain, and was rowed ashore. Every thing there bore the stamp of former ages, as if the world had suddenly rolled back for several centuries; and no wonder, for the Island of the Seven Cities had been cut off from the rest of the world for several hundred years. On shore Don Fernando spent an agreeable evening at the court-house, and late at night with reluctance he re-entered the barge, to return to his vessel. The barge sallied out to sea, but no caravel was to be seen. The oarsmen rowed on—their monotonous chant had a lulling effect. A drowsy influence crept over Don Fer-

nando: objects swam before his eyes, and he lost consciousness. On his recovery, he found himself in a strange cabin, surrounded by strangers. Where was he? On board a Portuguese ship, bound for Lisbon. How had he come there? He had been taken senseless from a wreck drifting about the ocean. The vessel arrived in the Tagus, and anchored before the famous capital. Don Fernando sprang joyfully on shore, and hastened to his ancestral mansion. A strange porter opened the door, who knew nothing of him or of his family: no people of the name had inhabited the house for many a year. He sought the house of his betrothed, the Donna Serafina. He beheld her on the balcony; then he raised his arms towards her with an exclamation of rapture. She cast upon him a look of indignation, and hastily retired. He rang at the door; as it was opened by the porter, he rushed past, sought the well-known chamber, and threw himself at the feet of Serafina. She started back with affright, and took refuge in the arms of a youthful cavalier.

"What mean you, Señor?" cried the latter.

"What right have you to ask that question?" demanded Don Fernando fiercely.

"The right of an affianced suitor!"

"O Serafina! is this your fidelity?" cried he in a tone of agony.

"Serafina! What mean you by Serafina, Señor? This lady's name is Maria."

"What!" cried Don Fernando; "is not this Serafina Alvarez, the original of yon portrait which smiles on me from the wall?"

"Holy Virgin!" cried the young lady, casting her eyes upon the portrait, "he is talking of my great-grandmother!"

With this Portuguese legend, which has been charmingly told by Washington Irving, must be compared the adventures of Porsenna, king of Russia, in the sixth volume of Dodsley's "Poetical Collection." Porsenna was carried off by Zephyr to a distant region, where the scenery was enchanting, the flowers ever in bloom, and creation put on her fairest guise. There he found a princess with whom he spent a few agreeable weeks. Being, however, anxious to return to his kingdom, he took leave of her, saying that after three months' absence his return would be necessary.

"'Three months!' replied the fair, 'three months alone!
Know that three hundred years are roll'd away
Since at my feet my lovely Phœnix lay.'

'Three hundred years!' re-echoed back the prince:
'A whole three hundred years completed since
I landed here?'"

On his return to Russia, he was overtaken by all-conquering time, and died. A precisely similar legend exists in Ireland.

In a similar manner Ogier-le-Danois found himself unconscious of the lapse of time in Avalon. He was one day carried by his steed Papillon along a track of light to the mystic Vale of Apples; there he alighted beside a sparkling fountain, around which waved bushes of fragrant flowering shrubs. By the fountain stood a beautiful maiden, extending to him a golden crown wreathed with blossoms. He put it on his head, and at once forgot the past: his battles, his love of glory, Charlemagne and his preux, died from his memory like a dream. He saw only Morgana, and felt no desire other than to sigh through eternity at her feet. One day the crown slipped from Ogier's head, and fell into the fountain: immediately his memory returned, and the thoughts of his friends and relatives, and military prowess, troubled his peace of mind. He begged Morgana to permit him to return to earth. She consented, and he found that, in the few hours of rapture in Avalon, two hundred years had elapsed. Charle-

magne, Roland, and Oliver were no more. Hugh Capet sat on the throne of France, the dynasty of the great Charles having come to an end. Ogier found no rest in France, and he returned to Avalon, nevermore to leave the fay Morgana.

In the Portuguese legend, the Island of the Seven Cities is unquestionably the land of departed spirits of the ancient Celtiberians; the properties of the old belief remain: the barge to conduct the spirit to the shore, the gorgeous scenery, and the splendid castle, but the significance of the myth has been lost, and a story of a Spanish colony having taken refuge in the far western sea has been invented, to account for the Don meeting with those of his own race in the phantom isle.

That the belief in this region was very strong in Ireland, about the eleventh century, is certain from its adoption into the popular mythology of the Norsemen, under the name of Greater Ireland (Ireland hit Mikla). Till the ruin of the Norse kingdom in the east of Erin, in the great battle of Clontarf (1114), the Norsemen were brought much in contact with the Irish, and by this means adopted Irish names, such as Nial and Cormac, and Irish superstitions as well. The name they gave to the Isle of the Blessed, in the

western seas, was either Great Ireland, because there the Erse tongue was spoken,—it being a colony of the souls of the Kelts,—or Hvitramanna-land, because there the inhabitants were robed in white. In the mediæval vision of Owayne the Knight, which is simply a fragment of Keltic mythology in a Christian garb, the paradise is enclosed by a fair wall, "whyte and brygth as glass," a reminiscence of the glass-palace in Avalon, and the inhabitants of that land—

"Fayre vestymentes they hadde on."

Some of these met him on his first starting on his journey, and there were fifteen in long white garments.

The following passages in the Icelandic chronicles refer to this land of mystery and romance.

"Mar of Holum married Thorkatla, and their son was Ari; he was storm-cast on the White-man's land, which some call Great Ireland; this lies in the Western Sea near Vinland the Good (America): it is called six days' sail due west from Ireland. Ari could never leave it, and there he was baptized. Hrafn, who sailed to Limerick, was the first to tell of this; he had spent a long time in Limerick in Ireland."

This passage is from the Landnámabok, a work of the twelfth century. A turbulent Icelander, named Bjorn of Bradwick, vanished from his home. Years after, a native of the same island, Gudlief by name, was trading between Iceland and Dublin, when, somewhere about the year 1000, he was caught by a furious gale from the east, and driven further in the western seas than he had ever visited before. Here he came upon a land well populated, where the people spoke the Irish tongue. The crew were taken before an assembly of the natives, and would probably have been hardly dealt with, had not a tall man ridden up, surrounded by an armed band, to whom all bowed the knee. This man spoke to Gudlief in the Norse tongue, and asked him whence he came. On hearing that he was an Icelander, he made particular inquiries about the residents in the immediate neighbourhood of Bradwick, and gave Gudlief a ring and a sword, to be taken to friends at home. Then he bade him return at once to Iceland, and warn his kindred not to seek him in his new home. Gudlief put again to sea, and, arriving safely in Iceland, related his adventures, concluding that the man he had seen was Bjorn of Bradwick[3]. Another Icelander

[3] Eyrbyggja Saga, c. 64. Hafniæ, 1787, p. 329.

brought away two children from Vinland, and they related that near their home was a land, where people walked about in flowing white robes, singing processional psalms. Northern antiquarians attempt to identify this White-man's land with Florida, where they suppose was settled the Welsh colony led beyond the sea by Madoc in 1169. I have little doubt that it is simply an Icelandic reminiscence of the popular Irish superstition relative to the Soul Island beneath the setting sun.

> "In his crystal ark,
> Whither sail'd Merlin with his band of bards,
> Old Merlin, master of the mystic lore;
> Belike his crystal ark, instinct with life,
> Obedient to the mighty Master, reach'd
> The Land of the Departed; there, belike,
> They in the clime of immortality,
> Themselves immortal, drink the gales of bliss
> Which o'er Flathinnis breathe eternal spring,
> Blending whatever odours make the gale
> Of evening sweet, whatever melody
> Charms the wood traveller."
>
> SOUTHEY'S *Madoc*, xi.

This Flath Innis, the Noble Island, is the Gaelic name for the western paradise. Macpherson, in his Introduction to the "History of Great Britain," relates a legend which agrees with those prevalent among other Keltic peoples. In former days there lived in Skerr a Druid of renown. He sat with his

face to the west on the shore, his eye following the declining sun, and he blamed the careless billows which tumbled between him and the distant Isle of Green. One day, as he sat musing on a rock, a storm arose on the sea; a cloud, under whose squally skirts the foaming waters tossed, rushed suddenly into the bay, and from its dark womb emerged a boat with white sails bent to the wind, and banks of gleaming oars on either side. But it was destitute of mariners, itself seeming to live and move. An unusual terror seized on the aged Druid; he heard a voice call, "Arise, and see the Green Isle of those who have passed away!" Then he entered the vessel. Immediately the wind shifted, the cloud enveloped him, and in the bosom of the vapour he sailed away. Seven days gleamed on him through the mist; on the eighth, the waves rolled violently, the vessel pitched, and darkness thickened around him, when suddenly he heard a cry, "The Isle! the Isle!" The clouds parted before him, the waves abated, the wind died away, and the vessel rushed into dazzling light. Before his eyes lay the Isle of the Departed basking in golden light. Its hills sloped green and tufted with beauteous trees to the shore, the mountain-tops were enveloped in bright and transparent clouds, from which

gushed limpid streams, which, wandering down the steep hill-sides with pleasant harp-like murmur, emptied themselves into the twinkling blue bays. The valleys were open and free to the ocean; trees loaded with leaves, which scarcely waved to the light breeze, were scattered on the green declivities and rising ground; all was calm and bright; the pure sun of autumn shone from his blue sky on the fields; he hastened not to the west for repose, nor was he seen to rise in the east, but hung as a golden lamp, ever illumining the Fortunate Isle.

There, in radiant halls, dwelt the spirits of the departed, ever blooming and beautiful, ever laughing and gay.

It is curious to note how retentive of ancient mythologic doctrines relative to death are the memories of the people. This Keltic fable of the 'Land beyond the Sea," to which the souls are borne after death, has engrafted itself on popular religion in England. The following hymn is from the collection of the Sunday School Union, and is founded on this venerable Druidic tenet:—

"Shall we meet beyond the river,
Where the surges cease to roll,
Where in all the bright For-ever
Sorrow ne'er shall press the soul?

"Shall we meet in that blest harbour,
When our stormy voyage is o'er?
Shall we meet and cast the anchor
By the fair celestial shore?

"Shall we meet with many loved ones,
Who were torn from our embrace?
Shall we listen to their voices,
And behold them face to face?"

So is a hymn from the Countess of Huntingdon's collection :—

"I launch into the deep,
And leave my native land,
Where sin lulls all asleep:
For thee I fain would all resign,
And sail for heav'n with thee and thine.

"Come, heav'nly wind, and blow
A prosp'rous gale of grace,
To waft from all below
To heav'n, my destined place:
There in full sail my port I'll find,
And leave the world and sin behind."

Or I might quote a poem on "The Last Voyage," from the Lyra Messianica, which one would have supposed to have been founded on the Gaelic legend told by Macpherson :—

"On! on! through the storm and the billow,
By life's chequer'd troubles opprest,
The rude deck my home and my pillow,
I sail to the land of the Blest.

The tempests of darkness confound me,
Above me the deep waters roll,
But the arms of sweet Pity surround me,
And bear up my foundering soul.

"With a wild and mysterious commotion
The torrent flows, rapid and strong;
Towards a mournful and shadowy ocean
My vessel bounds fiercely along.
Ye waters of gloom and of sorrow,
How dread are your tumult and roar!
But, on! for the brilliant to-morrow
That dawns upon yonder bright shore!

"O Pilot, the great and the glorious,
That sittest in garments so white,
O'er death and o'er hell 'The Victorious,'
The Way and the Truth and the Light,
Speak, speak to the darkness appalling,
And bid the mad turmoil to cease:
For, hark! the good Angels are calling
My soul to the haven of Peace.

"Now, ended all sighing and sadness,
The waves of destruction all spent,
I sing with the children of gladness
The song of immortal content."

It would be a study of no ordinary interest to trace modern popular Protestantism back to the mythologic systems of which it is the resultant. The early Fathers erred in regarding the ancient heresies as bastard forms of Christianity; they were distinct religions, feebly tinged by contact with the religion of the Cross. In like manner, I

am satisfied that we make a mistake in considering the Dissent of England, especially as manifested in greatest intensity in the wilds of Cornwall, Wales, and the eastern moors of Yorkshire, where the Keltic element is strong, as a form of Christianity. It is radically different: its framework and nerve is of ancient British origin, passing itself off as a spiritual Christianity.

In S. Peter's, Rome, is a statue of Jupiter, deprived of his thunderbolt, which is replaced by the emblematic keys. In like manner, much of the religion of the lower orders, which we regard as essentially Christian, is ancient heathenism, refitted with Christian symbols. The story of Jacob's stratagem is reversed: the voice is the elder brother's voice, but the hands and the raiment are those of the younger.

I have instanced the belief in angelic music calling away the soul as one heathen item in popular Protestant mythology—

> "Hark! they whisper! Angels say,
> 'Sister spirit, come away!'"

Another is embodied in the tenet that the souls of the departed become angels. In Judaic and Christian doctrine, the angel creation is distinct from that of human beings, and a Jew or a Catholic

would as little dream of confusing the distinct conception of angel and soul, as of believing in metempsychosis. But not so dissenting religion. According to Druidic dogma, the souls of the dead were guardians of the living; a belief shared with the ancient Indians, who venerated the spirits of their ancestry, the Pitris, as watching over and protecting them. Thus, the hymn "I want to be an Angel," so popular in dissenting schools, is founded on the venerable Aryan myth, and therefore of exceeding interest; but Christian it is not.

Another tenet which militates against Christian doctrine, and has supplanted it in popular belief, is that of the transmigration of the soul to bliss immediately on its departure from the body.

The article *stantis vel cadentis Fidei*, of the Apostles, was the resurrection of the body. If we read the Acts of the Apostles and their Epistles with care, it is striking how great weight, we find, is laid on this doctrine. They went every where preaching—1. the rising of Christ; 2. the consequent restoration of the bodies of Christians. "If the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised; and if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain. But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept. For as in Adam all

die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive[4]." This was the key-note to the teaching of the Apostles; it runs through the New Testament, and is reflected in the writings of the Fathers. It occupies its legitimate position in the Creeds, and the Church has never failed to insist upon it with no faltering voice.

But the doctrine of the soul being transported to heaven, and of its happiness being completed at death, finds no place in the Bible or the Liturgies of any branch—Greek, Roman, or Anglican—of the Church Catholic. Yet this was the tenet of our Keltic forefathers, and it has maintained itself in English Protestantism, so as to divest the doctrine of the resurrection of the body of its grasp on the popular mind. Among the Kelts, again, reception into the sacred inner circle of the illuminated was precisely analogous to the received dissenting doctrine of conversion. To it are applied, by the bards, terms such as 'the second birth,' 'the renewal,' which are to this day employed by Methodists to designate the mysterious process of conversion.

But to return to the subject of this article. It is a singular fact, that only the other day I heard of

[4] 1 Cor. xv. 16, 17, 20, 21.

a man in Cleveland, being buried two years ago with a candle, a penny, and a bottle of wine in his coffin : the candle to light him along the road, the penny to pay the ferry, and the wine to nourish him, as he went to the New Jerusalem. I was told this, and this explanation was given me, by some rustics who professed to have attended the funeral. This looks to me as though the shipping into the other land were not regarded merely as a figure of speech, but as a reality.

Swan-Maidens

I REMEMBER a long scramble in Iceland, over the ruins of tuff rock in a narrow gorge. My little pony had toiled sturdily up a dusty slope leading apparently to nothing, when, all at once, the ravine terminated in an abrupt scarp, whence was obtained a sudden peep of entrancing beauty. Far away in front gleamed a snowy dome of silver, doubly refined and burnished, resting upon a basement of gentian blue.

> "Some blue peaks in the distance rose,
> And white against the cold-white sky
> Shone out their crowning snows."

To the left started sheer precipices of ink-black rock to icy pinnacles, from which fell a continuous powder of white water into a lake, here black as the rocks above it, yonder bluer than the overarching heavens. Not a sound of animated life

broke the stillness, which would have been oppressive, but for the patter of the falling streams. The only living objects visible were two white swans rippling proudly through the clear water.

I have never since felt surprise at superstition attaching itself to these glorious birds, haunting lone tarns, pure as new-fallen snow. The first night I slept under my tent in the same island, I was wakened with a start by a wild triumphant strain as of clarions pealing from the sky. I crept from under canvas to look up, and saw a flight of the Hooper swans on their way to the lakes of the interior, high up, lit by the sun, like flakes of gold-leaf against the green sky of an arctic night.

Its solitary habits, the purity of its feathers, its wondrous song, have given to the wild swan a charm which has endeared it to poets, and ensured its introduction into mythology.

The ancient Indians, looking up at the sky over which coursed the white cirrus clouds, fabled of a heavenly lake in which bathed the swan-like Apsaras, impersonifications of these delicate light cloud-flakes. What these white vapours were, the ancient Aryans could not understand; therefore, because they bore a more or less remote resemblance to swans floating on blue waters, they sup-

posed them to be divine beings partaking of the nature and appearance of these beautiful birds.

The name Apsaras signifies those who go in the water, from *ap*, water, and *saras*, from sr, to go. Those who bear the name skim as swans over the lotus-pond of heaven, or, laying aside their feather-dresses, bathe, as beautiful females, in the limpid flood. These swan-maidens are the houris of the Vedic heaven; receiving to their arms the souls of the heroes. Sometimes they descend to earth, and become the wives of mortals; but soon their celestial nature re-asserts itself, and they expand their luminous wings, and soar away into the heavenly deeps of tranquil azure. I have elsewhere referred to the story of Urvaçi, the Apsaras, and her lover Puravaras. And Somadeva relates the adventures of a certain Niçcayadatta, who caught one of these celestial maidens, and then lost her, but, full of love, pursued her to the golden city above [1]. He tells also of Srîdatta, who beheld one bathing in the Ganges, and, plunging after her, found himself in a wondrous land beneath the water, in the company of the beloved [2].

In the Kalmuk collection of tales called Siddhi-

[1] Katha Sarit Sagara, book vii. c. 37.
[2] Ibid. book ii. c. 10.

Kûr[3], which is a translation from the Sanskrit, is a story of a woman who had three daughters. The girls took it in turn to keep the cattle. An ox was lost, and the eldest, in search of it, entered a cave, where she found an extensive lake of rippling blue water, on which swam a stainless swan. She asked for her ox, and the bird replied that she should have it if she would become his wife. She refused, and returned to her mother. Next day the second sister lost an ox, traced it to the cave, pursued it into the land of mysteries, and saw the blue lake surrounded by flowery banks, on which floated a silver swan. She refused to become his wife, as did her sister. Next day the same incidents were repeated with the third sister, who, however, proved more compliant to the wishes of the swan.

The Samojeds have a wild tale about swan-maidens. Two Samojeds lived in a desolate moor, where they caught foxes, sables, and bears. One went on a journey, the other remained at home. He who travelled, reached an old woman chopping birch-trees. He cut down the trees for her, and drew them to her tent. This gratified the old

[3] Siddhi-Kûr, Tale vii.

woman, and she bade him hide, and see what would take place. He concealed himself; and shortly after beheld seven maidens approach. They asked the old woman whether she had cut the wood herself, and then whether she was quite alone. To both questions she replied in the affirmative; then they went away. The old woman then drew the Samojed from his hiding-place, and bade him follow the traces of the damsels, and steal the dress of one of them. He obeyed. Emerging from a wood of gloomy pines, he came upon a beautiful lake, in which swam the seven maidens. Then the man took away the dress which lay nearest to him. The seven swam to the shore and sought their clothes. Those of one were gone. She cried bitterly, and exclaimed, "I will be the wife of him who has stolen my dress, if he will restore it me." He replied, "No, I will not give you back your feather dress, or you will spread your wings, and fly away from me."

"Give me my clothes, I am freezing!"

"Not far from here are seven Samojeds, who range the neighbourhood by day, and at night hang their hearts on the tent-pegs. Procure for me these hearts, and I will give you the clothes."

"In five days I will bring them to you."

Then he gave her the clothes, and returned to his companion.

One day the maiden came to him out of the sky, and asked him to accompany her to the brothers, whose hearts he had set her to procure. They came to the tent, and the man secreted himself, but the damsel became invisible. At night the seven Samojeds returned, ate their supper, and then hitched up their hearts to the tent-pegs. The swan-maiden stole them, and brought them to her lover. He dashed all but one upon the ground, and as they fell, the brothers expired. But the heart of the eldest he did not kill. Then the man without a heart awoke, and entreated to have it returned to him.

"Once upon a time you killed my mother," said the Samojed; "restore her to life, and you shall have your heart."

Then the man without the heart said to his wife, "Go to the place where the dead lie, there you will find a purse, in that purse is her soul; shake the purse over the dead woman's bones, and she will come to life." The woman did as she was ordered, and the mother of the Samojed revived. Then he dashed the heart to the ground, and the last of the seven brothers died.

But the swan-maiden took her own heart and that of her husband, and threw them into the air. The mother of the Samojed saw that they were without hearts, so she went to the lake where swam the six maidens; she stole one dress, and would not restore it till the maiden had promised to recover the hearts which were in the air. This she succeeded in doing, and her dress was restored [4].

Among the Minussinian Tatars these mysterious ladies have lost their grace and beauty. They dwell in the seventeenth region of the earth in raven-black rocks, and are fierce, raging demons of the air. They scourge themselves into action with a sword, lap the blood of the slain, and fly gorged with blood for forty years. In number they are forty, and yet they run together into one; so that at one time there is but a single swan-woman, at another the sky is dark with their numerous wings; a description which makes it easy to identify them with clouds. But there are not only evil swan-women, there are also good ones as well.

Katai Khan lived on the coast of the White Sea, at the foot of gloomy mountains. He had two daughters, Kara Kuruptju (black thimble) and

[4] Castren, Ethnologische Vorlesungen über die Altaischen Völker. St. Petersburg, 1857, pp. 172—176.

Kesel Djibäk (red silk); the elder evil disposed and in league with the powers of darkness, a friend of the raging swan-woman; the younger beautiful and good.

> "Kesel Djibäk often riseth,
> In a dress of snowy swan,
> To the realm where reign the Kudai.
> There the Kudai's daughters seven
> Fly on wings of snowy swan;
> With them sporteth Kesel Djibäk,
> Swimming on the golden lake[5]."

The seven Kudai, or gods of the Tatars, are the planets. Kara Kuruptju is the evening twilight, Kesel Djibäk the morning dawn which ascends to the heavens, and there lingers among the floating feathery clouds. But Kara Kuruptju descends to the gloomy realm of the evil-hearted swan-women, where she marries their son Djidar Mōs (bronzen), the thunder-cloud. These grimly swanlike damsels of the Tatars irresistibly remind us of the Phorcydæ; *κυκνόμορφοι*, as Æschylus calls them.

The classic swan myths must be considered in greater detail. They are numerous, for each Greek tribe had its own favourite myths, and additional fables were being constantly imported into

[5] Schiefner, Heldensagen der Minussinischen Tataren. St. Petersburg, 1859, p. 201.

religion from foreign sources. The swan was with the Greeks the bird of the Muses, and therefore also of Apollo. When the golden-haired deity was born, swans came from the golden stream of Pactolus, and seven times wheeled about Delos, uttering songs of joy.

> "Seven times, on snowy pinions, circle round
> The Delian shores, and skim along the ground:
> The vocal birds, the favourites of the Nine,
> In strains melodious hail the birth divine.
> Oft as they carol on resounding wings,
> To soothe Latona's pangs, as many strings
> Apollo fitted to the warbling lyre
> In aftertimes; but ere the sacred choir
> Of circling swans another concert sung,
> In melting notes, the power immortal sprung
> To glorious birth[6]."

A picture, this, of the white cloudlets fleeting around the rising sun.

The Muses were originally nymphs, and are the representatives of the Indian Apsaras; and it is on this account that the swans are their symbols. Beyond the Eridanus, in the land of the Lygii (*Λίγυες*, i.e. the clear-ringing), lived once a songful (*μουσικός*) king. Him Apollo transformed into a swan[7]. "Cycnus having left his kingdom, accom-

[6] Callimachus, Hymn. Delos. Cf. also Euripides, Iphig. in Tauris, 1110.

[7] Paus. i. 30, 3; Lucian, de Electro, 5.

panied by his sisters, was filling the verdant banks, and the river Eridanus, and the forest, with his complaints; when the human voice becomes shrill, and grey feathers conceal his hair. A long neck, too, extends from his breast, and a membrane joins his reddening toes; plumage clothes his sides, and his mouth becomes a pointless bill. Cycnus becomes a new bird; but he trusts himself neither to heavens nor the air. He frequents the pools and wide meers, and abhorring fires, choses the streams[8]." This Cycnus was a son of Sthenelus; he is the same as the son of Pelopea by Ares, and the son of Thyria by Poseidon. The son of Ares lived in southern Thessaly, where he slew pilgrims till Apollo cut off his head, and gave the skull to the temple of Ares. According to another version of the story, he was the son of Ares by Pyrene. When Herakles had slain him, the father was so enraged that he fought with the hero of many labours.

Cycnus, a son of Poseidon, was matched against Achilles, who, stripping him of his armour, suddenly beheld him transformed into a swan; or he is the son of Hyrie, who springs from a rock and becomes the bird from which he derives his name,

[8] Ovid, Metam. ii. Fab. 4.

whilst his mother dissolving into tears is transformed into a lake whereon the stately bird can glide.

In the fable of Leda, Zeus, the heaven above, clothed in swan's shape,—that is, enveloped in white mist,—embraces the fair Leda, who is probably the earth-mother[9], and by her becomes the father of the Dioscuri, the morning and evening twilights, and, according to some, of beautiful Helen, that is, Selene, the moon. The husband of Leda was Tyndareos, a name which identifies him with the thunderer, and he is therefore the same as Zeus.

According to the Cyprian legend, Nemesis, flying the pursuit of Zeus, took the form of a swan, and dropped an egg, from which issued Helen. Nemesis is a Norn, who, with Shame, "having abandoned men, depart, *when they have clad their fair skin in white raiment*, to the tribe of the immortals[1]."

Swans were kept and fed as sacred birds on the Eurotas, and were reverenced in Sparta as emblems

[9] Λήδα is probably from *lada*, i. e. woman. Leda, however, bears a close resemblance to Leto, the dark-robed (κυανόπεπλος), who takes her name from λανθάνω or λήθω, *lateo*, and signifies darkness, which gives birth to Apollo, the sun, and Artemis, the moon.

[1] Hesiod, W. and D., 200.

of Aphrodite: this is not surprising, as Aphrodite is identical with Helen, the moon, which swims at night as a silver swan upon the deep dark sky-sea. A late fable relates how that Achilles and Helen were united on a spirit-isle in Northern Pontus where they were served by flights of white birds[2].

In the North, however, is the home of the swan, and there we find the fables about the mystic bird in great profusion. There, as a Faroese ballad says—

> "Fly along, o'er the verdant ground,
> Glimmering swans to the rippling sound;"

or, as an Icelandic song has it—

> "Sweetly swans are singing
> In the summer time.
> There a swan as silver white,
> In the summer time,
> Lay upon my bosom light.
> Lily maiden,
> Sweetly swans are singing!"

The venerable Edda of Soemund relates how that there were once three brothers, sons of a king of the Finns; one was called Slagfid, the second Egil, the third Völund, the original of our Wayland smith. They went on snow-shoes and hunted wild

[2] Pausan. iii. 19.

beasts. They came to Ulfdal, and there made themselves a house, where there is a water called the Wolflake. Early one morning they found, on the border of the lake, three maidens sitting and spinning flax. Near them lay their swan plumages: they were Valkyries. Two of them, Hladgud, the Swan-white, and Hervör, the All-white, were daughters of King Hlödver; the third was Olrun, a daughter of Kiàr of Valland. They took them home with them to their dwelling: Egil had Olrun, Slagfid had Swan-white, and Völund All-white. They lived there seven years, and then they flew away, seeking conflicts, and did not return. Egil then went on snow-shoes in search of Olrun, and Slagfid in search of Swan-white, but Völund remained in Wolfdale. In the German story of the mighty smith, as preserved in the Wilkina Saga, this incident has disappeared; but that the myth was Teutonic as well as Scandinavian, appears from the poem on Frederick of Suabia, a composition of the fourteenth century[3], wherein is related how the hero wanders in search of his beloved Angelburga. By chance he arrives at a fountain, in which are bathing three maidens,

[3] Bragur, Leipzig, 1800, vi. p. 204.

with their dresses, consisting of doves' feathers, lying at the side. Wieland, armed with a root which renders him invisible, approaches the bank and steals the clothes. The maidens, on discovering their loss, utter cries of distress. Wieland appears, and promises to return their bird-skins if one of them will consent to be his wife. They agree to the terms, leaving the choice to Wieland, who selects Angelburga, whom he had long loved without having seen. Brunhild, who was won by Sigurd, and who died for him, is said to "move on her seat as a swan rocking on a wave[4];" and the three sea-maids from whom Hagne stole a dress, which is simply described as "wonderful" in the Nibelungen-Lied, are said to—

"swim as birds before him on the flood[5]."

An old German story tells of a nobleman who was hunting in a forest, when he emerged upon a lake in which bathed an exquisitely beautiful maiden. He stole up to her, and took from her the gold necklace she wore; then she lost her power to fly, and she became his wife. At one birth she bore seven sons, who had all of them gold chains

[4] Fornaldur-Sögur, i. p. 186.
[5] Nibelungén-Lied, 1476.

round their necks, and had the power, which their mother had possessed, of transforming themselves into swans at pleasure. In the ancient Gudrun-Lied, an angel approaches like a swimming wild-bird.

A Hessian forester once saw a beautiful swan floating on a lonely lake. Charmed with its beauty, he prepared to shoot it, when it exclaimed, "Shoot not, or it will cost you your life!" As he persisted in taking aim, the swan was suddenly transformed into a lovely girl, who swam towards him, and told him that she was bewitched, but could be freed if he would say an "Our Father" every Sunday for her during a twelvemonth, and not allude to what he had seen in conversation with his friends. He promised, but failed to keep silence, and lost her.

A hunter in Southern Germany lost his wife, and was in deep affliction. He went to a hermit and asked his advice; the aged man advised him to seek a lonely pool, and wait there till he saw three swans alight and despoil themselves of their feathers, then he was to steal one of the dresses, and never return it, but take the maiden whose was the vesture of plumes to be his wife. This the huntsman did, and he lived happily with the beautiful damsel for fifteen years. But one day he forgot to lock the cupboard in which he kept

the feather-dress; the wife discovered it, put it on, spread her wings, and never returned. In some household tales a wicked step-mother throws white skirts over her step-children, and they are at once transformed into swans.

The old fables of Valkyries were misunderstood, when Christianity had cast these damsels from heaven, and the stories were modified to account for the transformation. The sweet maidens no more swam of their own free will in the crystal waves, but swam thus through the force of an enchantment they were unable to break. Thus, in the Irish legend of Fionmala, the daughter of King Lir, on the death of the mother of Fingula (Fionmala) and her brothers, their father marries the wicked Aoife, who, through spite, transforms the children of Lir into swans, which must float on the waters for centuries, till the first mass-bell tingles. Who does not remember Tom Moore's verses on this legend?—

"Silent, O Moyle, be the roar of thy water;
Break not, ye breezes, your chain of repose,
While, murmuring mournfully, Lir's lovely daughter
Tells to the night-star the tale of her woes.
When shall the swan, her death-note singing,
Sleep with wings in darkness furl'd?
When will heaven, its sweet bells ringing,
Call my spirit from this stormy world?

"Sadly, O Moyle, to thy winter-wave weeping,
Fate bids me languish long ages away;
Yet still in her darkness doth Erin lie sleeping,
Still doth the pure light its dawning delay.
When will that day-star, mildly springing,
Warm our isle with peace and love?
When will heaven, its sweet bells ringing,
Call my spirit to the fields above?"

In another version of the story there is no term fixed for the breaking of the enchantment; but when the bells of Innis-gloria rang for the mass, four white birds rose from the loch and flew to church, where they occupied daily a bench, sitting side by side and exhibiting the utmost reverence and devotion. Charmed at the piety of the birds, S. Brandan prayed for them, when they were transformed into children, were baptized, and then died.

In a Sclavonian legend, a youth was reposing in a forest. The wind sighed through the trees, filling him with a tender melancholy which could find no expression in words. Presently there fluttered through the branches a snowy swan, which alighted on his breast. The youth clasped the beautiful bird to his heart, and resisted all its struggles to escape. Then the swan changed into a beautiful girl, who forthwith accompanied him to church, where they were united.

A weird Icelandic saga tells of a battle fought

on the ice of Lake Vener, between two Swedish kings, assisted by the chief Helgi and King Olaf of Norway, supported by Hromund Greipsson, the betrothed of the king's sister Swan-white. Above the heads of the combatants flew a great swan; this was Kara, the mistress of Helgi, who had transformed herself into a bird. She, by her incantations, blunted the weapons of King Olaf's men, so that they began to give way before the Swedes. But accidentally Helgi, in raising his sword, smote off the leg of the swan which floated on expanded wings above his head. From that moment the tide of battle turned, and the Norwegians were victorious [6].

It is a fair subject for inquiry, whether the popular iconography of the angel-hosts is not indebted to the heathen myth for its most striking features. Our delineations of angels in flowing white robes, with large pinions, are derived from the later Greek and Roman representations of victory; but were not these figures—half bird, half woman—derived from the Apsaras of the Vedas, who were but the fleecy clouds, supposed in the ages of man's simplicity to be celestial swans?

[6] Fornaldur Sögur, ii. p. 374.

The Knight of the Swan

"WE rede in the auncient and autentike cronicles that sometime ther was a noble king in Lilefort, otherwise named the strong yle, a muche riche lande, the which kinge had to name Pieron. And he tooke to wife and spouse Matabrunne the doughter of an other king puissaunt and riche mervailously." By his wife Matabrune, the king became father of Oriant, "the which after the dyscease of his father abode with his mother as heir of the realme, whiche he succeded and governed peasiabli without to be maried."

One day King Oriant chased a hart in the forest, and lost his way; exhausted with his ride, he drew rein near a fountain which bubbled out from under a mossy rock.

"And there he sat downe under a tree, to the which he reined his horse the better to solace and

sporte him at his owne pleasure. And thus as he was in consolacion there came to him a yonge damoysel moche grevous and of noble maintene, named Beatrice, accompanied of a noble knight, and two squires, with iiii damoyselles, the which she held in her service and famyliarite."

This Beatrice became the wife of Oriant, much to the chagrin of his mother, who had hitherto held rule in the palace, and who at once hated her daughter-in-law, and determined on her destruction.

The king had not been married many months before war broke out, and he was called from home to head his army. Before leaving, he consigned his wife to the care of his mother, who promised to guard her with the utmost fidelity. "Whan the time limited and ordeined of almighti god approched that the noble and goodly quene Beatrice should be delivered after the cours of nature, the false matrone aforsaid went and delibered in herselfe to execute and put in effecte her malignus or moste wicked purpose. . . . But she comen made maners of great welth to the said noble quene Beatrice. And sodainly in great paine and traivable of bodye, she childed vi sonnes and a faire doughter, at whose birthe eche of them

brought a chaine of silver about their neckes issuing out of their mothers wombe. And whan Matabrune saw the vii litle children borne having echone a chaine of silver at necke, she made them lightli and secretli to be borne a side by her chamberer of her teaching, and than toke vii litle dogges that she had prepared, and all bloudy laide them under the quene in maner as they had issued of her bodye."

Then Matabrune ordered her squire Marks to take the seven children to the river and drown them; but the man, moved by compassion, left them in the forest on his cloak, where they were found by a hermit who "toke and lapped them tenderly in his mantel and with al their chaines at their neckes he bare them into the litle hous of his hermitage, and there he warmed and sustened them of his poore goodnes as well as he coulde." Of these children, one excelled the others in beauty. The pious old man baptized the little babes, and called the one who surpassed the others by the name Helias. "And whan that they were in the age of theyr pleasaunt and fresshe grene yougth thei reane all about sporting and playinge in the said forest about the trees and floures."

One day it fell out that a yeoman of Queen

Matabrune, whilst chasing in the forest, saw the seven children sitting under a tree eating wild apples, each with a silver chain about his neck. Then he told Matabrune of the marvel he had seen, and she at once concluded that these were her grandchildren; wherefore she bade the yeoman take seven fellows with him and slay the children. But by the grace of God these men's hearts were softened, and, instead of murdering the little ones, they robbed them of their silver chains. But they only found six children, for the hermit had taken Helias with him on a begging excursion. Now, "as soone as their chaines were of, they were al transmued in an instaunt in faire white swannes by the divine grace, and began to flee in the ayre through the forest, making a piteous and lamentable crye."

Helias grew up with his godfather in the forest. The story goes on to relate how that the hermit was told by an angel in vision whose the children were; how a false charge was brought against Beatrice, and she was about to be executed, when Helias appeared in the lists, and by his valour proclaimed her innocence; and how Matabrune's treachery was discovered.

"But for to returne to the subject of the crony-

kill of the noble Helias knight of the swanne. It is to be noted that the said Helias knight of the swanne demanded of Kyng Oriant his father that it wolde please him to give him the chaines of silver of his brethern and sister that the goldesmith had brought. The which he delivered him with good herte for to dispose them at his pleasure. Than he made an othe and sware that he wolde never rest tyll he had so longe sought by pondes and stagnes that he had founde his v brethren and his sister, which were transmued into swannes. But our Lorde that consoleth his freendes in exaltinge their good will shewed greatly his vertue. For in the river that ranne about the kinges palays appeared visibly the swannes before all the people. —And incontinent the kynge and the queene descended wyth many lordes, knightes, and gentilmen, and came with great diligence upon the water syde, for to see the above sayde swannes. The king and the queene behelde them piteousli in weeping for sorrow that they had to se theyr poore children so transmued into swannes. And whan they saw the good Helias come nere them they began to make a mervaylous feast and rejoyced them in the water. So he approched upon the brinke: and whan they sawe him nere them, they

came lightli fawning and flickering about him making him chere, and he playned lovingly their fethers. After he shewed them the chaynes of silver, whereby they set them in good ordre before him. And to five of them he remised the chaynes about their neckes, and sodeynlye they began to retourne to theyr propre humayne forme as they were before." But unfortunately the sixth chain had been melted to form a silver goblet, and therefore one of the brothers was unable to regain his human shape.

Helias spent some time with his father; but a voice within his breast called him to further adventures.

"After certayne tyme that the victoryous kynge Helyas had posseded the Realme of Lyleforte in good peace and tranquilite of justice, it happened on a day as he was in his palais looking towarde the river that he apperceived the swanne, one of his brethren that was not yet tourned into his fourme humayne, for that his chaine was molten for to make Matabrune a cup. And the sayd swanne was in the water before a ship, the which he had led to the wharfe as abiding king Helias. And when Helias saw him, he saide in himselfe: Here is a signification that God sendeth to me for to

shew to me that I ought to go by the guyding of this swanne into some countrey for to have honour and consolacion.

"And when Helyas had mekelye taken his leave of all his parentes and freendes, he made to bere his armures and armes of honoure into the shyppe, with hys target and his bright sheelde, of whiche as it is written the felde was of sylver, and thereon a double crosse of golde. So descended anon the sayd Helyas with his parentes and freendes, the which came to convey him unto the brinke of the water."

About this time, Otho, Emperor of Germany, held court at Neumagen, there to decide between Clarissa, Duchess of Bouillon, and the Count of Frankfort, who claimed her duchy. It was decided that their right should be established by single combat. The Count of Frankfort was to appear in person in the lists, whilst the duchess was to provide some doughty warrior who would do battle for her.

"Than the good lady as al abasshed loked aboute her if there were ony present that in her need wolde helpe her. But none wolde medle seynge the case to her imposed. Wherefore she committed her to God, praying Him humbly to

succour her, and reprove the injury that wickedly to her was imposed by the sayd erle."

The council broke up, and lords and ladies were scattered along the banks of the Meuse.

"So, as they stray'd, a swan they saw
Sail stately up and strong,
And by a silver chain she drew
A little boat along,
Whose streamer to the gentle breeze,
Long floating, flutter'd light,
Beneath whose crimson canopy
There lay reclined a knight.

"With arching crest and swelling breast
On sail'd the stately swan,
And lightly up the parting tide
The little boat came on.
And onward to the shore they drew,
And leapt to land the knight,
And down the stream the little boat
Fell soon beyond the sight."

SOUTHEY'S *Rudiger*.

Of course this knight, who is Helias, fights the Count of Frankfort, overcomes him, and wins the heart of the daughter of the duchess. Thus Helias became Duke of Bouillon.

But before marrying the lady, he warned her that if she asked his name, he would have to leave her.

At the end of nine months, the wife of Helias

gave birth to a daughter, who was named Ydain at the font, and who afterwards became the mother of Godfrey de Bouillon, King of Jerusalem, and of his brothers Baldwin and Eustace.

One night the wife forgot the injunction of her husband, and began to ask him his name and kindred. Then he rebuked her sorrowfully, and leaving his bed, bade her farewell. Instantly the swan reappeared on the river, drawing the little shallop after it, and uttering loud cries to call its brother. So Helias stepped into the boat, and the swan swam with it from the sight of the sorrowing lady.

The romance of Helias[1] continues the story to the times of Godfrey de Bouillon, but I shall leave it at this point, as it ceases to deal with the myth which is the subject of this article. The story is very ancient and popular. It is told of Lohengrin, Loherangrin, Salvius, and Gerhard the Swan, whilst the lady is Beatrice of Cleves, or Else of Brabant. In the twelfth century it seems to have localized itself about the Lower Rhine.

Probably the most ancient mention of the fable

[1] Helyas, the Knight of the Swanne. From the edition of Copland, reprinted in Thoms: "Early English Prose Romances," 1858, vol. iii.

is that of William of Tyre (1180), who says: "We pass over, intentionally, the fable of the Swan, although many people regard it as a fact, that from it he (Godfrey de Bouillon) had his origin, because this story seems destitute of truth." Next to him to speak of the story is Helinandus (circ. 1220), quoted by Vincent de Beauvais[2]: "In the diocese of Cologne, a famous and vast palace overhangs the Rhine, it is called Juvamen. Thither when once many princes were assembled, suddenly there came up a skiff, drawn by a swan attached to it by a silver chain. Then a strange and unknown knight leaped out before all, and the swan returned with the boat. The knight afterwards married, and had children. At length, when dwelling in this palace, he saw the swan return again with the boat and chain: he at once re-entered the vessel, and was never seen again; but his progeny remain to this day."

A genealogy of the house of Flanders, in a MS. of the thirteenth century, states: "Eustachius venit ad Buillon ad domum ducissæ, quæ uxor erat militis, qui vocabatur miles Cigni[3]." Jacob van

[2] Specul. Nat. ii. 127.

[3] Reiffenberg, Le Chevalier au Cygne. Bruxelles, 1846, p. viii.

Maerlant (b. 1235), in his "Spieghel Historiael[4]," alludes to it—

> "Logenaers niesdaet an doen,
> Dat si hem willen tien ane,
> Dat tie ridder metter swane
> Siere moeder vader was.
> No wijf no man, als ict vernam
> Ne was noint swane, daer hi af quam
> Als ist dat hem Brabanters beroemen
> Dat si van der Swane sijn coemen."

And Nicolaes de Klerc, who wrote in 1318, thus refers to it in his "Brabantine Gests:" "Formerly the Dukes of Brabant have been much belied in that it is said of them that they came with a swan[5]." And Jan Veldenar (1480) says: "Now, once upon a time, this noble Jungfrau of Cleves was on the banks by Nymwegen, and it was clear weather, and she gazed up the Rhine, and saw a strange sight: for there came sailing down a white swan with a gold chain about its neck, and by this it drew a little skiff . . ."—and so on.

There is an Icelandic saga of Helis, the Knight of the Swan, translated from the French by the Monk Robert, in 1226. In the Paris royal library is a romance upon this subject, consisting of about 30,000 lines, begun by a Renax or Renant, and

[4] Maerlant, Fig. 1. 29.

[5] Von Wyn, Avondstonden, p. 270.

finished by a Gandor de Douay. In the British Museum is a volume of French romances, containing, among others, "L'Ystoire du Chevalier au Signe," told in not less than 3000 lines.

The "Chevelere Assigne," a shorter poem on the same subject, was reprinted by M. Utterson for the Roxburghe Club, from a MS. in the Cottonian library, which has been quoted by Percy and Warton as an early specimen of alliterative versification. It is certainly not later than the reign of Henry VI.

The next prose romance of Helias is that of Pierre Desrey, entitled "Les faictz et gestes du preux Godsffroy de Boulion, aussi plusieurs croniques et histoires;" Paris, without date. "La Genealogie avecques les gestes et nobles faitz darmes du tres preux et renomme prince Godeffroy de Boulion: et de ses chevalereux freres Baudouin et Eustace: yssus et descendus de la tres noble et illustre lignee du vertueux Chevalier au Cyne;" Paris, Jean Petit, 1504; also Lyons, 1580. This book was partly translated into English, and printed by Wynkyn de Worde, "The hystory of Hilyas Knight of the Swann, imprynted by Wynkyn de Worde," &c., 1512; and in full by Caxton, under the title, "The last Siege and Con-

queste of Jherusalem, with many histories therein comprised;" Westmester, fol. 1480.

It is from the first thirty-eight chapters of the French "Faits et Gestes," that Robert Copland translated his Helias, which he dedicated "to the puyssant and illustrious prynce, lorde Edwarde, duke of Buckynghame," because he was lineally descended from the Knight of the Swan. This duke was beheaded, May 17th, 1521.

We need hardly follow the story in other translations.

The romance, as we have it, is a compilation of at least two distinct myths. The one is that of the Swan-children, the other of the Swan-knight. The compiler of the romance has pieced the first legend to the second, in order to explain it. In its original form, the knight who came to Neumagen, or Cleves, in the swan-led boat, and went away again, was unaccounted for: who he was, no man knew; and Heywood, in his "Hierarchies of the Blessed Angels," 1635, suggests that he was one of the evil spirits called *incubi;* but the romancer solved the mystery by prefixing to the story of his marriage with the duchess a story of transformation, similar to that of Fionmala, referred to in the previous article.

We shall put aside the story of the swan-children, and confine our attention to the genuine myth.

The home of the fable was that border-land where Germans and Kelts met, where the Nibelungen legends were brought in contact with the romances of Arthur and the Sangreal.

Lohengrin belongs to the round table; the hero who releases Beatrice of Cleves is called Elias Grail. Pighius relates that in ancient annals it is recorded that Elias came from the blessed land of the earthly paradise, which is called Graele[6]. And the name Helias, Helius, Elis, or Salvius, is but a corruption of the Keltic ala, eala, ealadh, a swan. I believe the story of the Knight of the Swan to be a myth of local Brabantine origin. That it is not the invention of the romancer is evident from the variations in the tale, some of which we must now consider.

1. Lohengrin.

The Duke of Limburg and Brabant died leaving an only daughter, Else or Elsam. On his death-bed he committed her to the care of Frederick von Telramund, a brave knight, who had overcome a dragon in Sweden. After the duke's death, Frede-

[6] Hercules Prodicus, Colon. 1609.

rick claimed the hand of Else, on the plea that it had been promised him; but when she refused it, he appealed to the emperor, Henry the Fowler, asking permission to assert his right in the lists against any champion Else might select.

Permission was granted, and the duchess looked in vain for a knight who would fight in her cause against the redoubted Frederick of Telramund.

Then, far away, in the sacred temple of the Grail, at Montsalvatsch, tolled the bell, untouched by human hands, a signal that help was needed. At once Lohengrin, son of Percival, was sent to the rescue, but whither to go he knew not. He stood foot in stirrup, ready to mount, when a swan appeared on the river drawing a ship along. No sooner did Lohengrin behold this, than he exclaimed: "Take back the horse to its stable; I will go with the bird whither it shall lead!"

Trusting in God, he took no provision on board. After he had been five days on the water, the swan caught a fish, ate half, and gave the other half to the knight.

In the mean while the day of ordeal approached, and Else fell into despair. But at the hour when the lists were opened, there appeared the boat drawn by the silver swan; and in the little vessel

lay Lohengrin asleep upon his shield. The swan drew the boat to the landing, the knight awoke, sprang ashore, and then the bird swam away with the vessel.

Lohengrin, as soon as he heard the story of the misfortunes of the Duchess Else, undertook to fight for her. The knight of the Grail prevailed, and slew Frederick. Then Else surrendered herself and her duchy to him; but he would only accept her hand on condition that she should not ask his race. For some time they lived together happily. One day, in a tournament, he overthrew the Duke of Cleves and broke his arm, whereat the Duchess of Cleves exclaimed: "This Lohengrin may be a strong man and a Christian, but who knows whence he has sprung!" These words reached the ears of the Duchess of Brabant; she coloured and hung her head.

At night, Lohengrin heard her sobbing. He asked: "My love, what ails thee?"

She replied: "The Duchess of Cleves has wounded me."

Lohengrin asked no more.

Next night she wept again; her husband again asked the reason, and received the same answer.

On the third night she burst forth with: "Husband,

be not angry, but I must know whence you have sprung."

Then Lohengrin told her that his father was Percival, and that God had sent him from the custody of the Grail. And he called his children to him, and said, kissing them: "Here are my horn and my sword, keep them carefully; and here, my wife, is the ring my mother gave me—never part with it."

Now, at break of day, the swan reappeared on the river, drawing the little shallop. Lohengrin re-entered the boat, and departed never to return.

Such is the story in the ancient German poem of Lohengrin, published by Görres from a MS. in the Vatican; and in the great Percival of Wolfram von Eschenbach, verses 24,614—24,715.

2. The swan-knight of Conrad von Würzburg resembles Lohengrin and Helias in the outline of the story, but no name is given to the hero. He marries the daughter of the deceased Duke Gottfried of Brabant, and fights against the Duke of Saxony. His children are the ancestors of the great houses of Gelders and Cleves, which bear a swan as their arms.

3. Gerard Swan.

One day Charlemagne stood at his window overlooking the Rhine. Then he was ware of a

swan floating on the water, drawing a boat by a silken band fastened round its neck. When the boat came alongside of the quay, the swan ceased to row, and the emperor saw that a knight armed cap-a-pie sat in the skiff, and round his neck hung a ribbon to which was attached a note. Navilon (Nibelung), one of the emperor's men, gave the stranger his hand to help him out of the bark, and conducted him to Charlemagne. The monarch inquired of the stranger his name; for answer he pointed to the letter on his breast. This the king read. It stated that Gerard Swan sought a wife and lands.

Navilon then unarmed the strange knight, and the king gave him a costly mantle. So they went to table. But when Roland observed the man, he asked who he was. Charlemagne replied, "He is a godsend;" and Roland observed, "He seems to be a man of courage."

Gerard proved to be a worthy knight; he served the monarch well. He soon learned to talk. The king was very fond of him, and gave him his sister Adalis in marriage, and made him Duke of Ardennes[7].

[7] Northern Chapbooks of the Emperor Charlemagne. Nyerup, Morskabsläsning, p. 90.

4. Helias.

In the year 711 lived Beatrice only daughter of Dietrich, Duke of Cleves, at her castle of Nymwegen. One bright day she sat at her window looking down the Rhine, when she saw a swan drawing a boat by a gold chain. In this vessel was Helias. He came ashore, won her heart, became Duke of Cleves, and lived happily with her for many years. One thing alone interfered with her happiness: she knew not whence her husband came, and he had strictly forbidden her to ask. But once she broke his command, and asked him whence he had come to her. Then he gave his children his sword, his horn, and his ring, bidding them never separate or lose these legacies, and entering the boat which returned for him, he vanished for ever[8]. One of the towers of Cleves is called, after this event, the Swan-tower, and is surmounted by a swan.

5. Salvius Brabo.

Gottfried-Carl was King of Tongres, and lived at Megen on the Maas. He had a son named Carl-Ynach, whom he banished for some misdemeanour. Carl-Ynach fled to Rome, where he fell in love with Germana, daughter of the Proconsul Lucius

[8] Grimm, Deutsche Sagen, 1866, ii. p. 267.

Julius, and fled with her from the eternal city. They took ship to Venice, whence they travelled on horseback to Burgundy, and reached Cambray. Thence they proceeded to a place called Senes, and finding a beautiful valley, they dismounted to repose. Here a swan, at which one of the servants aimed an arrow, took refuge in the arms of Germana, who, delighted at the incident, asked Carl-Ynach the name of the bird in his native tongue. He replied "Swana." "Then," said she, "let me be henceforth called by that name, lest, if I keep my former name, I be recognized and parted from thee."

The lady took the swan with her as they proceeded on their journey, and fed it from her hand.

They now reached Florimont, near Brussels, and there Carl-Ynach heard that his father was dead. He was therefore King of Tongres. Shortly after his arrival at Megen, his wife gave birth to a son, whom he named Octavian, and next year to a daughter, whom they called Swan. Shortly after, Ariovistus, King of the Saxones, waged war against Julius Cæsar. Carl-Ynach united his forces with those of Ariovistus, and fell in the battle of Besançon. Swan, his widow, then fled with his children and her husband's body to Megen, fearing

her brother Julius Cæsar. There she buried Carl-Ynach, and daily fed her swan upon his grave.

In the Roman army was a hero, Salvius Brabon by name, descended from Frankus, son of Hector of Troy. Cæsar rested at Cleves, and Salvius Brabon amused himself with shooting birds in the neighbourhood. One day he wandered to the banks of the Rhine. On its discoloured waters swam a snow-white swan, playfully pulling at the rope which bound a small skiff to the shore. Salvius leaped into the boat, and cast it loose from its mooring. Then the bird swam before him as a guide, and he rowed after it. On reaching the castle of Megen, the swan rose from the water, and flew to the grave of Carl-Ynach, where its mistress was wont to feed it. Salvius pursued it, bow in hand, and was about to discharge an arrow, when a window of the castle opened, and a lady cried to him in Latin to spare the bird. Salvius consented; and casting aside his bow and arrow, entered the castle. There he learned the story of the lady. He hastened to Julius Cæsar, and told him that his sister was in the neighbourhood. The conqueror accompanied Salvius to the castle, and embraced Germana with joy. Salvius Brabon then asked the emperor to give him the young damsel

Swan in marriage, and he readily complied with the request, creating him at the same time Duke of Brabant; Octavian took the name of Germanicus, and became King of Cologne, and Tongres exchanged its name for Germania, after the sister of the emperor, its queen[9].

It was in commemoration of the beautiful myth of the Swan-knight, that Frederick II. of Brandenburg instituted the Order of the Swan, in 1440. The badge was a chain from which was suspended an image of the Virgin, and underneath that a swan. The badge of the Cleves order of knighthood was also a silver swan suspended from a gold chain. In 1453, Duke Adolph of Cleves held a tournament at Lille, "au nom du Chevalier au Cygne, serviteur des dames."

On the 13th May, 1548, the Count of Cleves presented the players with a silver swan of considerable value. Charles, Duke of Cleves, attempted, in 1615, to revive the order of the swan. When Cleves fell to Prussia, the Count de Bar endeavoured to persuade Frederick the Great to resuscitate the order, but in vain. With Anne of Cleves, the white swan passed to our tavern signboards.

[9] Jehan le Maire, Illustrations de Gaule. Paris, 1548, iii. pp. 20—23.

The myth is a Belgic religious myth. Just as in the Keltic legends of the Fortunate Isles, we hear of mortals who went by ship to the Avalon of Spirits, and then returned to their fellow-mortals; so in this Belgic fable we have a denizen of the distant paradise coming by boat to this inhabited land, and leaving it again.

In the former legends the happy mortal lives in the embraces of a divine being in perpetual youth; in the latter, a heavenly being unites himself, for a while, to a woman of earth, and becomes the ancestor of an aristocracy.

An Anglo-Saxon story bears some traces of the same legend. A ship once arrived on the coast of Scandia, without rudder or sail; in it lay a boy asleep upon his arms. The natives took and educated him, calling him Scild, the son of Sceaf (the skiff). In course of time he became their king. In Beowulf, it is added that Scild reigned long; and when he saw that he was about to die, he bade his men lay him fully armed in a boat, and thrust him out to sea. Among the Norse such a practice was not unknown. King Haki, when he died, was laid in a ship, the vessel fired, and sent out upon the waves. And the same is told of Baldur. But the shipping of the dead had

no significance in Scandinavian mythology, whilst it was full of meaning in that of the Kelts. The Scandinavian Valhalla was not situated beyond the Western Sea, but on the summit of a great mountain; whereas the Keltic Avalon lay over the blue waters, beneath the setting sun. Consequently, I believe the placing of the dead in ships to have been a practice imported among the Northern and Germanic nations, and not indigenous [1].

The classic fable of Helios sailing in his golden vessel deserves notice in connexion with the myth of Helias. That the sun and moon travel in boats of silver or gold is an idea common to many mythologies. At first sight it seems probable that Helias is identical with Helios; but the difficulty of explaining how this classic deity should have become localized in Brabant is insurmountable, and I prefer the derivation of the name Helias from the Keltic appellation of the swan.

The necessity of the knight leaving his bride the moment she inquired his race connects this story with the Grail myth. According to the rules of the order of the Sangreal, every knight was bound to return to the temple of the order, immediately

[1] Appendix B.

that any one asked his lineage and office. In the popular legend this reason does not appear, because the Grail was a genuine Keltic myth, with its roots in the mysteries of Druidism.

Of the different editions of Lohengrin, Helias, and the other Swan-knight legends, I will give no list, as the principal are referred to in the notes of this article.

The Sangreal

WHEN Sir Lancelot came to the palace of King Pelles, in the words of Sir Thomas Malory[1], "either of them made much of other, and so they went into the castle for to take their repast. And anon there came in a dove at the window, and in her bill there seemed a little sencer of gold, and therewith there was such a savour as though all the spicery of the world had been there; and forthwith all there was upon the table all manner of meates and drinkes that they could thinke upon. So there came a damosell, passing faire and young, and she beare a vessell of gold betweene her hands, and thereto the king kneeled devoutly and said his prayers, and so did all that were there: 'Oh, Jesu!' said Sir Launcelot, 'what may this meane?'

[1] La Mort d'Arthure, compiled by Sir Thomas Malory; reprinted from the text of 1634 by Thomas Wright, iii., c. 2, &c.

'This is,' said King Pelles, 'the richest thing that any man hath living; and when this thing goeth about, the round-table shall bee broken. And wit yee well,' said King Pelles, 'that this is the holy Sancgreall which yee have heere seene.'"

The next to see the sacred vessel was the pious Sir Bors. And after that he had seen it, "he was led to bed into a faire large chamber, and many doores were shut about that chamber. And when Sir Bors espied all those doores, he made all the people to avoide, for he might have no body with him; but in no wise Sir Bors would unarme him, but so laid him upon the bed. And right so he saw come in a light that he might wel see a speare great and long which come straight upon him pointlong. And so Sir Bors seemed that the head of the speare brent like a taper; and anon, or Sir Bors wist, the speare head smote him into the shoulder an hand breadth in deepness, and that wound grieved Sir Bors passing sore."

One day, when King Arthur and his court were at Camelot, sitting at supper, "anon they heard cracking and crying of thunder, that hem thought the place should all to-rive; in the midst of the blast entred a sunne-beame more clear by seaven times than ever they saw day, and all they were

alighted by the grace of the Holy Ghost. Then began every knight to behold other, and either saw other by their seeming fairer than ever they saw afore, nor for then there was no knight that might speake any word a great while; and so they looked every man on other as they had beene dombe. Then there entred into the hall the holy grale covered with white samite, but there was none that might see it, nor who beare it, and there was all the hall fulfilled with good odours, and every knight had such meate and drinke as he best loved in this world; and when the holy grale had beene borne through the hall, then the holy vessel departed suddenly, and they wist not where it became."

Then the knights stood up in their places one after another, and vowed to go in quest of the Sangreal, and not to return to the round-table till they had obtained a full view of it.

We must leave the knights to start upon their quest, and turn, for the history of the Grail, to the romance of the San Greal, the Perceval of Chrétien de Troyes, written at the close of the twelfth century, and the Titurel and Parcival of Wolfram von Eschenbach, translated into German from romances older than that of Chrétien de Troyes.

When Christ was transfixed by the spear, there flowed from His side blood and water. Joseph of Arimathæa collected the blood in the vessel from which the Saviour had eaten the last supper. The enraged Jews cast Joseph into prison, and left him to die of hunger. But for forty-two years he lay in the dungeon nourished and invigorated by the sacred vessel which was in his possession. Titus released Joseph from prison, and received baptism at his hands. Then Joseph started with the vessel and the blood, or the Sangreal, for Britain. Before he died, he confided the sacred treasure to his nephew. But according to another version of the legend, the Grail was preserved in heaven, till there should appear on earth a race of heroes, worthy to become its guardians. The chief of this line was an Asiatic prince, named Perillus, who came to Gaul, where his descendants allied themselves with the family of a Breton prince. Titurel, who sprang from this heroic lineage, was the one chosen of God to found the worship of the Sangreal among the Gauls. Angels brought the vessel to him, and instructed him in its mysteries. He erected, on the model of the temple at Jerusalem, a magnificent temple to the Grail. He organized a band of guardians of the vessel, and elaborated the cere-

monial of its worship. The Grail, we are told, was only visible to the baptized, and only partially if they were tainted by sin. To the pure in heart alone was it perfectly visible.

Every Good Friday a white dove descended from heaven, bearing a white oblation which it laid before the Grail. The holy vessel gave oracles, expressed miraculously in characters which appeared on the surface of the bowl, and then vanished. Spiritual blessings attended on the vision and custody of the sacred vessel; the guardians, and those who were privileged to behold it, were conscious of a mysterious internal joy, a foretaste of that of heaven. The material blessings are easier to be described. The Grail stood in the place of all food, it supplied its worshippers with the meats they most desired and the drinks most to their taste; it maintained them in perpetual youth. The day on which the Grail had been seen, its guardians were incapable of being wounded or suffering any hurt. If they fought for eight days after the vision, they were susceptible of wounds but not of death.

Every thing in the construction of the temple was full of mystery. It was erected on Montsalvatsch, of precious stones, gold, and aloe-wood. In form it was circular; there were three principal

entrances. The knights who watched the Grail were patterns of virtue. All sensual love, even within the limits of marriage, was strictly forbidden. A single thought of passion would obscure the eye and conceal the mystic vessel. The chief of this order of knights was entitled King. As his office was hereditary, he was permitted to marry.

When the faith or the right was in jeopardy, a bell rang in the chapel of the Grail, and a knight was bound to go forth sword in hand to the defence. Wherever he was, should a question be asked him of his condition or office in the temple, he was to refuse to answer, and at once to return to Montsalvatsch.

Titurel reigned four hundred years, and he, to all appearances, seemed of the age of forty. He was succeeded in his office by his son Frimutelle, who transgressed, by loving a damsel, Floramie by name. Consequently he lost the grace of the holy Grail, and fell in a joust, engaged in to give pleasure and do honour to his mistress.

He was succeeded by his son Amfortas, who fell into grievous sin, and was given over by the Grail to be wounded by a lance. Then it was announced that he should not be healed of his wound till one came, pure and young, to Montsalvatsch who would

see the mysteries of the sacred vessel, and ask their signification.

This Amfortas is the Pelles or Pellam of the "Mort d'Arthure."

Years passed, and the king lay wounded in his palace. The brotherhood of the Grail was dissolved, and the existence of the temple and its mystic rites was almost forgotten. Sir Thomas Malory gives a different account of the wounding of the king from that in the Romans du San Greal, and makes his healing depend on the arrival of a knight who is a "clean maid," who shall apply to him the sacred blood.

In the fulness of time, Galahad, the Good Knight, came to king Arthur's court, and went forth, with the other knights, to the quest of the holy Grail.

Let us follow Launcelot who was on a ship.

"The winde arose and drove Sir Launcelot more than a moneth throughout the sea, where he slept but little and prayed unto God that he might have a sight of the Sancgreall. So it befell upon a night at midnight hee arived afore a castle on the backe side, which was rich and faire, and there was a posterne that opened toward the sea, and was open without any keeping, save two lions kept the entrie, and the moone shined cleare.

"Anon Sir Launcelot heard a voice that said, 'Launcelot, goe out of this ship, and enter into the castle where thou shalt see a great part of thy desire.' Then he ranne to his armes, and armed him, and so hee went unto the gate, and saw the two lions; then hee set hands to his sword and drew it; then came there sudainly a dwarfe, that smote him upon the arme so sone that the sword fell out of his hand. Then he heard a voice that said, 'Oh man of evill faith and poore beliefe, wherefore believest thou more in thy harneis than in thy Maker? for Hee might more availe thee than thine armour, in whose service thou art set.'—Then Sir Launcelot entered in so armed, and hee found no gate nor doore but it was opened. And so at the last he found a chamber whereof the doore was shut, and hee set his hands thereto for to have opened it, but hee might not. Then he enforced him much for to undoe the doore. Then he listened; and heard a voice which sung so sweetly, that it seemed none earthly thing, and him thought that the voice said, 'Joy and honour be to the Father of heaven.' Then Sir Launcelot kneeled downe before the chamber, for well he wist that there was the Sancgreall in that chamber. Then said he, 'Faire sweete Father, Jesu Christ, if ever I did thing that pleased the

Lord, for thy pittie ne have me not in despite for my foull sins done here before time, and that thou shew me some thing of that which I seek.'

"And with that he saw the chamber doore open, and there came out a great clearenesse, that the house was as bright as though all the torches of the world had beene there. So came hee to the chamber doore, and would have entered, and anon a voice said unto him, 'Flee, Sir Launcelot, and enter not, for thou oughtest not to doe it, and if thou enter thou shalt forethinke it.' And hee withdrew him back, and was right heavie in his mind.

"Then looked hee up in the midst of the chamber, and saw a table of silver, and the holy vessell covered with red samite, and many angels about it, whereof one of them held a candell of waxe burning, and the other held a crosse, and the ornaments of the altar. And before the holy vessell hee saw a good man clothed like a priest, and it seemed that hee was at the sakering of the masse; and it seemed unto Sir Launcelot that above the priest's hands there were three men, whereof the two put the youngest by likeness betweene the priest's hands, and so hee lift it up on high, and it seemed to shew so to the people. And then Sir Launcelot mer-

vailed not a little, for him thought that the priest was so greatly charged of the figure, that him seemed that heem should have fallen to the ground; and when hee saw none about him that would helpe him, then hee came to the doore a great pace—and entred into the chamber, and came toward the table of silver; and when he came nigh he felt a breath, that him thought was intermedled with fire, which smote him so sore in the visage that him thought it all to-brent his visage, and therewith hee fell to the ground, and had no power to arise."

Sir Galahad, Sir Percival, and Sir Bors met in the forest, and rode together to the castle of King Pelles. There they supped, and after supper they beheld

a great light, and in the light were four angels bearing upan ancient man in bishop's vestments, and they set him down before a table of silver, on which appeared the Sangreal. And this aged prelate was Joseph of Arimathæa, "the first bishop of Christendom." Then other angels appeared bearing candles, and a spear from which fell drops of blood, and these drops were collected by an angel in a box. Then the angels set the candles upon the table, and "the fourth set the holy speare even upright

upon the vessel," as represented on an ancient churchyard crucifix, in rude sculpture, at Sancreed, in Cornwall.

Joseph next celebrated the sacred mysteries, and, at the consecration, our Blessed Lord appeared and said, "Galahad, sonne, wotest thou what I hold between My hands?" "Nay," replied the maiden knight, "but if yee tell mee." "This is," He said, "the holy dish wherein I eate the lambe on Sher-Thursday, and now hast thou seene that thou desirest most to see, but yet hast thou not seene it so openly as thou shalt see it in the citie of Sarras, in the spirituall place. Therefore thou must goe hence, and beare with thee this holy vessell, for this night it shall depart from the realme of Logris, that it shall never be seen more heere."

So Galahad, after having anointed the wounded king with the blood which dropped from the spear, and made him whole, departed with his friends Bors and Perceval to the mystic city of Sarras, where he was made king.

The story is somewhat different in the Perceval of Chrétien de Troyes. This romance was commenced by Chrétien at the request of Phillip of Alsace, Count of Flanders; it was continued by

Gauthier de Denet, and finished by Manessier, towards the close of the twelfth century. It is the history of the quest of the San Greal.

Perceval was the son of a poor widow in Wales, brought up by her in a forest, far removed from all warlike images. One day he saw a knight ride past, and from that moment he had no rest, till his mother gave him arms and let him ride to the court of King Arthur. On his way he saw a tent in which lay a beautiful damsel asleep. Perceval took the ring from her finger, ate and drank at the table which was spread in the tent, and then pursued his course. As he entered the court at Cardueil, a felon knight stole the goblet from the king's table. Perceval went in pursuit. One evening he entered a castle where lay a sick king on a couch. The door of the hall opened, and there came in a servant bearing a bleeding lance, others with golden candlesticks, and finally the holy Grail. Perceval asked no questions, and was reproached on his leaving the castle for not making inquiries into the mystery of the Grail. Afterwards he undertook the quest of this marvellous vessel, but had great difficulty in finding again the castle of the wounded king. When his search was crowned with success, he asked the signification of

the mystic rite which took place before his eyes, and was told that the king was a Fisher, descended from Joseph of Arimathæa, and uncle of Perceval; that the spear was that which had pierced the Saviour's side, and that the Grail was the vessel in which the sacred blood of Christ had been collected. The king had been wounded in trying to mend a sword which had been broken by a knight named Pertinax, and which could only be welded together by a knight without fear and reproach. The Fisher-king would recover health only when Pertinax died. On hearing this, Perceval sought out and slew Pertinax, healed his uncle, obtained in return the sacred vessel and the bleeding lance, and retired to a hermitage. On his death—

> "Fut au ciel remis sans doutance
> Et le Saint-Graal et la Lance."

It is very certain that Chrétien de Troyes was not the inventor of this mystic tale, for there exists in the "Red Book" a Welsh tale entitled Pheredur, which is indisputably the original of Perceval.

The "Red Book" is a volume of Welsh prose and verse romances and tales, begun in the year 1318, and finished in 1454. It is preserved in the

library of Jesus College, Oxford. Although Pheredur was transcribed after Perceval was composed, it bears evidence of a higher antiquity.

Pheredur is not a Christian. His habits are barbarous. The Grail is not a sacred Christian vessel, but a mysterious relic of a past heathen rite. The same incidents occur in Perceval as in Pheredur, but in the former they are modified and softened, and various points indicative of barbarism and paganism are omitted.

Pheredur enters a castle, and "Whilst he and his uncle were discoursing together, they beheld two young men entering the hall, bearing a lance of unusual length, from the point of which distilled three gouts of gore; and when the company beheld this, they began to wail and lament. But the old man continued to talk with Pheredur; and as he did not tell Pheredur the reason of what took place, Pheredur did not venture to ask him. And when the cries ceased, there entered two damsels with a basin in which was the head of a man swimming in blood. Then the company uttered a piercing wail."

In the Perceval, and in the Mort d'Arthure, the head is omitted, and to the lance and grail are attributed a Christian value; but in the Pheredur

there is no trace whatever of these symbols having any Christian signification.

Pheredur signifies, according to M. de la Villemarqué [2], "The Companion of the Basin," and is a synonym of Perceval; Per being a basin, and Këval and Këdur having alike the meaning of companion.

Pheredur is mentioned as well in the Annales Cambriæ, which extend from the year 444 to 1066. Geoffrey of Monmouth also speaks of the reign of Peredure, "who governed the people with generosity and mildness, so that he even excelled his other brothers who had preceded him [3];" and the anonymous author of the "Life of Merlin" speaks of him as the companion and consoler of the bard [4]. Aneurin, the contemporary of Hengst and Horsa, the author of the Gododin, terms him one of the most illustrious princes of the Isle of Britain [5].

Taliesin ben Beirdd, the famous poet of the same age, speaks of the sacred vessel in a manner which connects it with bardic mythology. "This vessel," he says, "inspires poetic genius, gives wisdom, discovers the knowledge of futurity, the mysteries

[2] Les Romans de la Table-Ronde 1861.

[3] Geoffr. Monm., lib. iii. c. 18.

[4] Vita Merlini, pp. 2. 4.

[5] Villemarqué, Poèmes des Bardes Bretons du sixième siècle, p. 298.

of the world, the whole treasure of human sciences." And he describes it as adorned like the Grail, with a beading of pearls and diamonds[6]. One of his poems contains the history of Bran the Blessed, in which the mystic vessel occupies a prominent position.

One day, whilst hunting in Ireland, Bran arrived on the banks of a lake, called the Lake of the Basin. He saw there a black and hideous giant, a witch, and a dwarf, rise from the water holding a vessel in their hands. He persuaded them to accompany him to Wales, where he lodged them in his palace, and in return for his hospitality, received the basin. This vase had the property of healing all mortal ills, of staunching blood, of resuscitating the dead. But those who were restored to life by it were not enabled to speak, lest they should divulge the mysteries of the vessel. At a banquet given by Bran to Martholone, King of Ireland, the Welsh prince presented the bowl to his guest. He regretted that he had made this present, when some years later war broke out between the King of Ireland and himself. Then he found himself unable to cope with his adversary, whose every slain soldier recovered

[6] Myvyrian, i. pp. 17, 18, 19, 20. 37. 45. 67.

life by means of the sacred vessel. But Bran smote off the head of a hostile chief, and cast the bloody head into the bowl, when it burst, and its virtues ceased.

This basin was reckoned as one of the thirteen wonders of the Isle of Britain, brought by Merdhyn, or Merlin, in his crystal ark. That it is the same as Ceridwen's cauldron is not improbable. Ceridwen was the Keltic Great Mother, the Demeter, the source of life, and the receptacle of the dead. The story of her cauldron is told in the Pair Ceridwen (vessel of Ceridwen), or Hanes Taliesin (History of Taliesin).

In ancient times there was a man, Tegid Voel by name, who had a wife called Ceridwen, by whom he had a son Morvran ap Tegid, and a daughter Creirwy, both very beautiful; also Aragddu, the most hideous of beings. Ceridwen, knowing that the poor deformed child would have little joy of life, determined to prepare for him the Water of Inspiration. She placed a cauldron on a fire, filled it with the requisite ingredients, and left little Gwion to attend to its seething, and blind Morda to keep up the fire for a year and a day, without suffering the operation to cease for a moment. One day, near the end of the twelve-

month, three drops spirted out of the bubbling liquid, and Gwion caught them on his finger. As they scalded him, he put his finger into his mouth, and at once obtained the knowledge of futurity. He saw that Ceridwen would attempt his death, in consequence of his having tasted the precious drops; so he prudently took to flight. Then the cauldron burst and extinguished the fire.

Ceridwen, in her rage, struck Morda on the head, and rushed in pursuit of Gwion the Little. He transformed himself into a hare; then she took the form of a hound. He sprang into a river and took that of a fish; instantly she became an otter. Then he rose from the water as a little bird; but she soared after him as a hawk. Then he dropped as a grain of wheat on a corn-heap; but Ceridwen, instantly taking the shape of a hen, swallowed him. She became pregnant thereby, and in nine months gave birth to a lovely child which she hid in a leather coracle and committed to the waves, on the 29th of April.

In this bardic tale we have certainly a very ancient Keltic myth. What the cauldron signifies it is difficult to ascertain. Some suppose it to represent the ocean, others the working of the vital force of earth, which produces the three seasons which are

good, symbolized by the drops. But we know too little of druidic mythology, and those legends which have come to us have descended in a too altered form, for us to place much confidence in such conjectures.

But that this vessel of the liquor of Wisdom held a prominent place in British mythology is certain from the allusions made to it by the bards. Taliesin, in the description of this initiation into the mysteries of the basin, cries out, "I have lost my speech!" because on all who had been admitted to the privileges of full membership secrecy was imposed. This initiation was regarded as a new-birth; and those who had once become joined members were regarded as elect, regenerate, separate from the rest of mankind, who lay in darkness and ignorance.

That originally the ceremonies of initiation included human sacrifices is more than probable from the vessel being represented as containing human blood, and a lance forming part of the paraphernalia, from which dropped blood. In the story of Pheredur, the vessel contained a man's head floating in gore. In that of Bran the Blessed, the head is thrown into the basin to destroy its efficacy.

Taliesin also refers to Pheredur as "the hero of the bleeding head [7]."

The lance is also referred to by Welsh authors. One of the predictions attributed to Taliesin holds out to the Britons the hope that "the Kingdom of Logres (England) shall perish before the bleeding lance;" and five centuries later, Chrétien de Troyes quotes this saying—

> "Il est écrit qu'il est une heure,
> Où tout le royaume de Logres,
> Qui jadis fut la terre ès Ogres,
> Sera détruit par cette lance."

This lance was probably a symbol of war.

The first to adapt the druidic mystery to Christianity was a British hermit, who wrote a Latin legend on the subject. Helinandus (d. 1227) says, "At this time (A.D. 720), in Britain, a marvellous vision was shown by an angel to a certain hermit: it was of the basin or paropsis in which the Saviour supped with His disciples; concerning which the history was written by the same hermit, which is called the Gradal." And he adds, "In French they give the name gradal, or graal, to a large,

[7] Myvyrian, i. p. 80.

rather deep vessel, in which rich meats with their gravy are served to the wealthy [8]."

The date at which lived this anchorite is not certain, for though Helinandus says he had his vision in 720, Usher places him later than 1140 [9].

After the composition of this legend, the romancers took possession of the myth and adapted it to Christian chivalrous exigencies. The bardic table of the elect became the round-table of Arthur's knights, and the sacred vessel of mysteries became the Grail. The head of the victim was forgotten, and the sacrificial blood was supposed to be that of Christ.

It is likely that the tradition of the ancient druidic brotherhood lingered on and gained consistency again among the Templars. Just as the Miles Templi fought for the holy sepulchre, so did the soldier of Montsalvatsch for the holy Grail. Both orders were vowed to chastity and obedience, both were subject to a head, who exercised regal authority. The ancient temple of the Grail, like Stonehenge, was circular; so also were the churches dedicated to S. Sepulchre, by the soldier-monks. The charge of heresy was brought against the order

[8] Vincent. Belov. Speculum Hist., lib. xxiii. c. 147.

[9] Usserius, Primordia, p. 16.

of the Templars, and it has been supposed that they were imbued with gnosticism. That this Eastern heresy should have influenced a mediæval Western society, I think very unlikely; no other traces of gnosticism are to be found in the religious history of the Occident, which certainly would have been the case had the heresy been sufficiently powerful to have obtained mastery over an ecclesiastical society. I think the root of the false doctrine or practices of the Templars must be looked for in the West.

The Templars were charged with having an idol which the Chronicles of S. Denys (which terminate 1461) describe as "an old skin embalmed and polished, in which the Templar places his very vile faith and trust, and in which he confidently believes: and it has in the sockets eyes of carbuncle shining with the brightness of the sky." Abraham Bzov, in his continuation of the "Church History" of Baronius, quotes a charge brought by the Italian bishops against the Templars, to this effect: "They have a certain head, the face pale like that of a man, with black curled hair, and round the neck a gilded ornament, which indeed belonged to no saint, and this they adored, making prayers before it." And one of the questions asked

by the Pope of the witnesses was, "whether they had not a skull or some sort of image, to which they rendered divine homage?"

It seems to me probable that this head, if there were truth in the charge, was revered because it was part of an ancient druidic rite to produce a head upon a vessel, though for what purposes we do not know. Friar Bacon constructed a head which gave oracles. Possibly some such property was attributed to the Templar, and previously to the druidic head. Livy tells us that a bloody head of an enemy was a national Keltic symbol (xxiii. 24), and that the Boii brought the head into their temples, where they cleansed it and adorned it with gold, and then used it on festivals for a sacred vessel, out of which to make drink-offerings.

To enter with any thing like completeness into the most interesting and intricate subject of druidic mythology and ceremonial would occupy too much space. This paper will necessarily be imperfect; the religion of our British ancestors has yet to be written. Those who have hitherto approached the subject have so done with preconceived theories which have caused them to read wrong the sacred myths and rites they were interpreting. Much is to be learned from the

Arthurian Romances, much from bardic remains, and much from Breton, Welsh, Gaelic, and Irish folk-lore.

That all thus recovered will be in a corrupted form I am well aware, but a practised eye will be able to restore what is disintegrated, and will know to detect antiquity, though disguised under the newest robe.

A careful study of these sources, conducted by the light of comparative mythology, will, I am satisfied, lead to the discovery that, under the name of Methodism, we have the old druidic religion still alive, energetic, and possibly more vigorous than it was when it exercised a spiritual supremacy over the whole of Britain. With the loss of the British tongue, much of the old terminology has died out, and a series of adaptations to Christianity has taken place, without radically affecting the system.

Theophilus

A FEW years before the Persian invasion in 538, there lived, in the town of Adana in Cilicia, a priest named Theophilus, treasurer and archdeacon. He lived in strict observance of all his religious duties, was famous for his liberality to the poor, his sympathy with the afflicted, his eloquence in the pulpit, his private devotion, and severe asceticism. On the decease of the bishop, by popular acclamation he was summoned to the episcopal oversight of the diocese, but his deep humility urged him to refuse the office, even when it was pressed upon him by the metropolitan. Seldom has a *nolo episcopari* been carried out to such an emphatic refusal as was given by Theophilus. A stranger was raised to the vacant seat, and the treasurer resumed the course of life he had pursued for so many years with credit to himself and advan-

tage to others, content in his own mind at having refused the office, which might have aroused his pride, and which certainly would have diminished his opportunities of self-sacrifice. Virtue invariably arouses the spirit of detraction, and Theophilus, by his refusal of the bishopric, was thrust into public notice, and attracted public attention. The consequence was that the evil-minded and envious originated slanders, which, circulating widely, produced a revulsion of feeling towards Theophilus and, from being generally reported, were accepted as substantially true. These stories reaching the ears of the new bishop, he sent for the archdeacon, and without properly investigating the charges, concluding he was guilty, deprived him of his offices.

One would have supposed that the humility which had required the holy man to refuse a mitre, would have rendered him callous to the voice of slander, and have sustained him under deprivation. But the trial was too great for his virtue. He brooded over the accusations raised against him, and the wrongs inflicted upon him, till the whole object of his labour was the clearing of his character. He sought every available means of unmasking the calumnies of his maligners, and exposing the falsity of the charges raised against him. But he found

himself unable to effect his object: one man is powerless against a multitude, and slander is a hydra which, when maimed in one head, produces others in the place of that struck off. Baffled, despairing, and without a friend to sustain his cause, the poor clerk sought redress in a manner which a month ago would have filled him with horror. He visited a necromancer, who led him at midnight to a place where four cross-roads met, and there conjured up Satan, who promised reinstatement in all his offices to the unfortunate Theophilus, and, what he valued more, a complete clearing of his character. The priest, to obtain these boons, signed away his soul with a pen dipped in his own blood, and abjured for ever Jesus Christ and his spotless mother.

On the morrow, the bishop discovering his error, how we know not, sent for Theophilus, and acknowledged publicly that he had been misled by false reports, the utter valuelessness of which he was ready frankly to acknowledge; and he asked pardon of the priest, for having unjustly deprived him of his office. The populace enthusiastically reversed their late opinion of the treasurer, and greeted him as a saint and confessor. For some days all went well, and in the excitement of a re-

turn to his former occupations the compact he had made was forgotten. But after a while, as reason and religion resumed their sway, the conscience of Theophilus gave him no rest. He paced his room at nights in an agony of terror, his face lost its colour, his brow was seamed with wrinkles, an unutterable horror gleamed from his deep-set eyes. Hour by hour he prayed, but found no relief. At length he resolved on a solemn fast of forty days. This he accomplished, praying nightly in the church of the Panhagia till the grey of morning stole in at the little windows of the dome and obscured the lamps. On the fortieth night, the Blessed Virgin appeared to him, and sadly rebuked him for his sin. He implored her pardon and all-prevailing intercession, and this she promised him. The following night she re-appeared and assured him that Christ had, at her prayer, forgiven him. With a cry of joy he awoke; and on his breast lay the deed which had made over his soul to Satan, obtained from the evil one by the mercy of the sacred Mother of God.

The next day was Sunday. He rose, spent some time in acts of thanksgiving, and then went to church where the divine liturgy was being celebrated. After the reading of the gospel, he flung

himself at the bishop's feet, and requested permission to make his confession in public. Then he related the circumstances of his fall, and showed the compact signed with his blood to the assembled multitude. Having finished his confession, he prostrated himself before the bishop and asked for absolution. The deed was torn and burned before the people, he was reconciled and received the blessed sacrament, after which he returned to his house in a fever, and died at the expiration of three days. The Church honours him as a penitent, on the 4th February.

The original account of this famous compact with the devil is in the Greek of Eutychianus, disciple of Theophilus, who declares that he relates what he had seen with his own eyes, and heard from the mouth of Theophilus himself. From the Greek of Eutychianus, two early Latin versions are extant, one by Paulus Diaconus, the other by Gentianus Hervetus. The former of these is published in the great work of the Bollandists, who fix the date of the event in 538. The version of Gentianus Hervetus purports to be a translation from Symeon Metaphrastes, who flourished in the tenth century, and who embodied the narrative of Eutychianus in his great collection of the Lives of the Saints.

In the tenth century, Hrosvitha, the illustrious nun of Gandersheim in Saxony, composed a Latin poem on the story of Theophilus. In the eleventh century the legend was versified by Marbodus, Bishop of Rennes. There is a poem on the subject by Gaultier de Coincy. Other rhymed versions have been published by M. Achille Jubinal, and M. Paulin Paris. One of the best of the ancient poems is that of Rutebeuf, a trouvère of the thirteenth century. There are several older miracle plays on mysteries of Theophilus: one in French, published by M. Francisque Michel[1]; another in low German, published by M. Dasent[2]. The latter gentleman has collected a great number of pieces on Theophilus in various European languages, and quotes references to the legend in early French, Anglo-Saxon, Anglo-Norman, and German writers.

Archbishop Ælfric (d. 1006) alludes to the story in his "Homilies;" S. Bernard also, in his "Deprecatio ad gloriosam Virginem Mariam;" Vincent of Beauvais, in his wonderful "Speculum Historiale;" S. Bonaventura, as a passionate devotee to the Virgin, could not omit it from his "Speculum

[1] Le Théâtre Français au moyen âge. Paris, p. 137.

[2] Theophilus, in Icelandic, Low German, &c. London p. 23.

Beatæ Mariæ ;" Jacques de Voragine inserts it in his "Golden Legend," and Albertus Magnus includes it in his "Biblia B. Mariæ Virginis." It is again mentioned by the great German poet of the twelfth century, Hartmann von der Aue, and by Konrad von Würzburg, in the thirteenth century. A Flemish Theophilus was published by M. Philipp Blommaert, from an old MS. of the fourteenth century, in 1836. To the same century belongs one version of the Theophilus legend in Icelandic, published by M. Dasent ; the other is younger by a century. An old Swedish Theophilus of 1350 exists in the royal library at Stockholm.

In the cathedral of Notre-Dame, at Paris, are two sculptured representations of the fable ; one is on the north porch. In the cathedral of Laon it is painted on a window in the choir, in eighteen medallions. It is also to be seen in the church of S. Peter, at Troyes, and in that of S. Julien at Mans, in both instances on stained glass.

Further information as to the legend, with the texts, can be found in—"Theophilus, in Icelandic, Low German, and other tongues, from MSS. in the Royal Library, Stockholm, by G. Webbe Dasent, M.A. Stockholm, 1845 ;" in "E. F. Sommer, De Theophili cum Diabole fœdere. Halle, 1844 ;" and

in "Miracle de Théophile, mis en vers au commencement du XIIIme siècle, par Gauthier de Coincy, publié par M. D. Maillet. Rennes, 1838."

I do not think it improbable that this famous story may rest on a foundation of truth; indeed it bears on the face of it tokens of authenticity. Theophilus is driven from his position by slanders: this preys on his mind. By some means he is reinstated. The revulsion of feeling upsets his reason, he undertakes a prodigious fast, goes crazy, tells a long rambling story about a compact with the devil, and dies three days after in brain-fever. His narrative is the only extraordinary item in the tale. If we remember that this was told after a forty-days' fast, and immediately before a mortal fever, the only thing to be wondered at in the legend is that any sane persons believed his ravings to have in them a foundation of truth.

APPENDIX A

Pre-Christian Crosses

I HAVE said that the phallic origin attributed to the cross is destitute of evidence. In a work like this, which will be in the hands of general readers, it is impossible to enter into the subject.

I believe I have conscientiously examined the question. If I saw that there was sufficient evidence to substantiate the theory, I would adopt it without hesitation. But I think a better claim may be made for the lightning, and a better still for the ancient instrument of two sticks used for producing fire by friction.

An article on Sun worship in the "English Leader," copied into "Public Opinion" (Sept. 14, 1867), assumes the identity of the cross with the phallus. The article is full of assertions, rather bold and reckless than well supported by evidence.

It asserts on the authority of the Abbé Pluche that the crux ansata was the symbol of the annual inundation of the Nile. The speculations of the learned on the signification of the Egyptian hieroglyphics, previous to the discoveries of Champollion, are, however, devoid of weight. "The crux ansata," it adds, "that is, the cross and circle, was the sign of Venus or sensual love,—the goddess from whose name our word *venery* is derived,—and it is still the astronomical

symbol of the planet which bears her name." As we have already seen, the crux ansata was not exclusively the symbol of Astarte; it was a sign of divinity and was placed near every god to indicate him as being Divine. It appears beside Baal as well as Astarte.

If used more frequently with her than with other deities, it was because it symbolized her power over moisture, she being the Moon. The cross did not belong to her as a goddess of sensuality, but as presiding over the month and its rains; to Baal it belonged as a year-god guiding the seasons.

The same article refers to the Indian cross as though it were a phallus; whereas the symbols are entirely and radically distinct, as may be seen by reference to the plates of Müller's "Glauben, Wissen, und Kunst der Hindus."

APPENDIX B

Shipping the Dead

THE following curious passage from Gervase of Tilbury may not prove uninteresting when treating of the transport of the dead by boats.

OTIA IMPERIALIA, Decisio iii. c. 90.

Insigne mirum ac ex divina virtute miraculum audi, Princeps Sacratissime. Caput regni Burgundionum, quod Arelatense dicitur, civitas est Arelas, antiquissimis dotata privilegiis. Hanc ordinatus ab Apostolis Petro et Paulo, Trophimus, qui . . . . deliberavit cœmeterium solemne ad meridianam urbis partem constituere, in quo omnium orthodoxorum corpora sepulturæ traderentur, ut, sicut ab Arelatensi ecclesia tota Gallia fidei sumsit exordium, ita et mortui in Christo undecunque advecti sepulturæ communis haberent beneficium. Facta itaque consecratione solemni per manus sanctissimorum antistitum ad Orientalem portam, ubi nunc est ecclesia ab ipsis in honorem B. Virginis consecrata, illis Christus, pridem in carne familiariter agnitus, apparuit, opus eorum sua benedictione profundens, dato cœmeterio ac illis sepeliendis munere, ut quicunque inibi sepelirentur, nullas in cadaveribus suis paterentur diabolicas illusiones. Ex hujusmodi ergo Dominicæ benedictionis munere, apud omnes

majoris auctoritatis Galliarum principes ac clericos inolevit, quod maxima patentum pars illuc sepulturam habent, et quidam in plaustris, alii in curribus, nonnulli in equis, plurimi per dependulum fluentis Rhodani ad cœmeterium Campi Elisii deferebantur. Est ergo omni admiratione dignissimum, quod nullus in thecis positus mortuus ultimos civitatis Arelatensis terminos, quos Rochetam nominant, quantalibet vi ventorum aut tempestate compulsus præterit, sed infra semper subsistens in aqua rotatur, donec applicet, aut ad ripam fluminis ductus cœmeterio sacro inferatur. Mirandis magis miranda succedunt, quæ oculis conspeximus sub innumera utriusque sexus hominum multitudine. Solent, ergo præmisimus, mortui in doliis bituminatis ac in thecis corpora mortuorum a longinquis regionibus fluminis Rhodani dimitti cum pecunia sigillata, quæ cœmeterio tam sacro, nomine eleemosynæ, confertur. Uno aliquo die, nondum decennio delapso, dolium cum mortuo suo descendit inter illud angustum, quod ex alternis ripis castrum Tarasconense et castrum Belliquadri prospectant. Exilientes adolescentes Belliquadri dolium ad terram trahunt, et relicto mortuo pecuniam reconditam rapiunt. Depulsum dolium inter impetuosi amnis fluctus subsistit, et nec vi fluminis præcipitis nec juvenum impulsibus potuit descendere, verum rotans et in se revolvens, eosdem circinabat fluminis fluctus. . . . . Tandem, restituto censu, confestim mortuus sine omni impellentis adjutorio viam aggreditur, et infra modicam horam apud civitatem Arelatensem applicans, sepulturæ honorifice traditur.

THE END.

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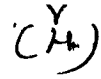

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